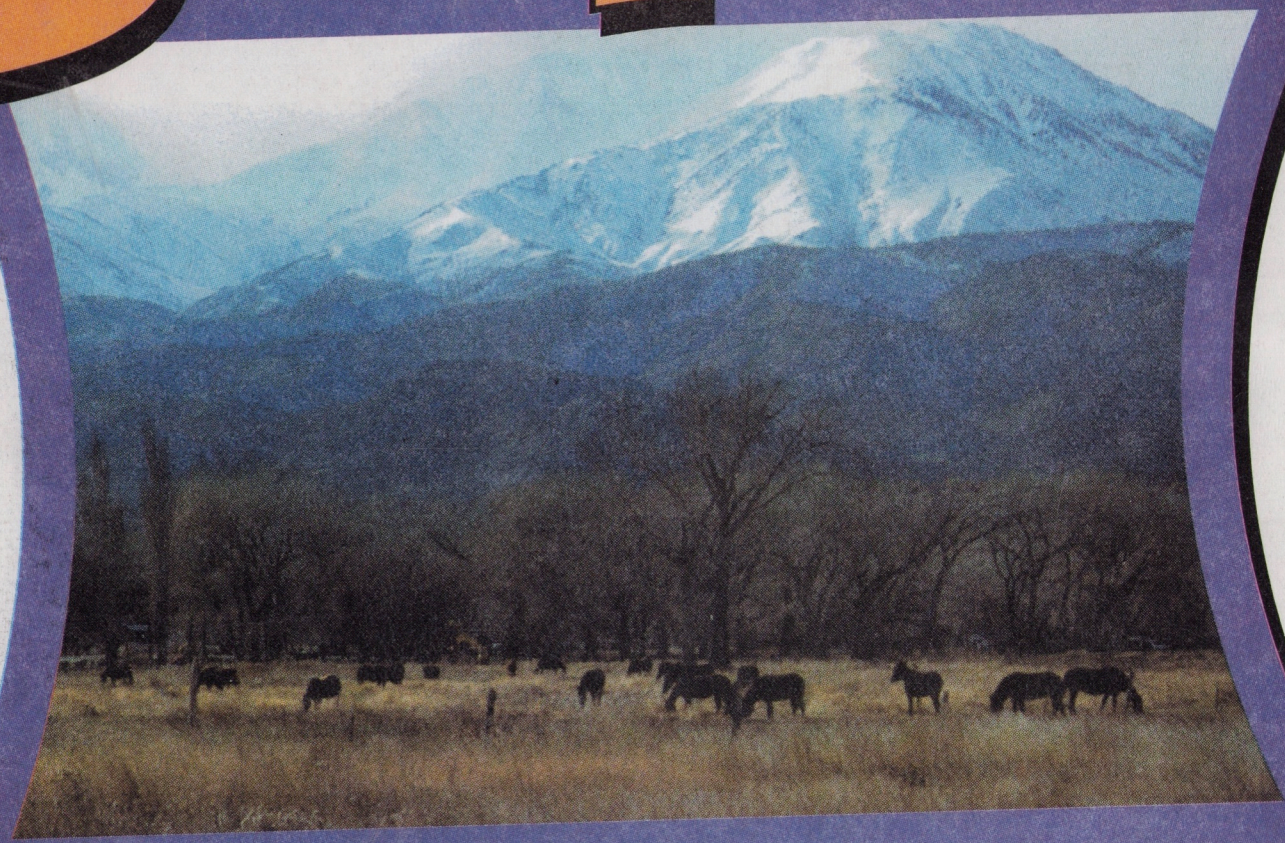
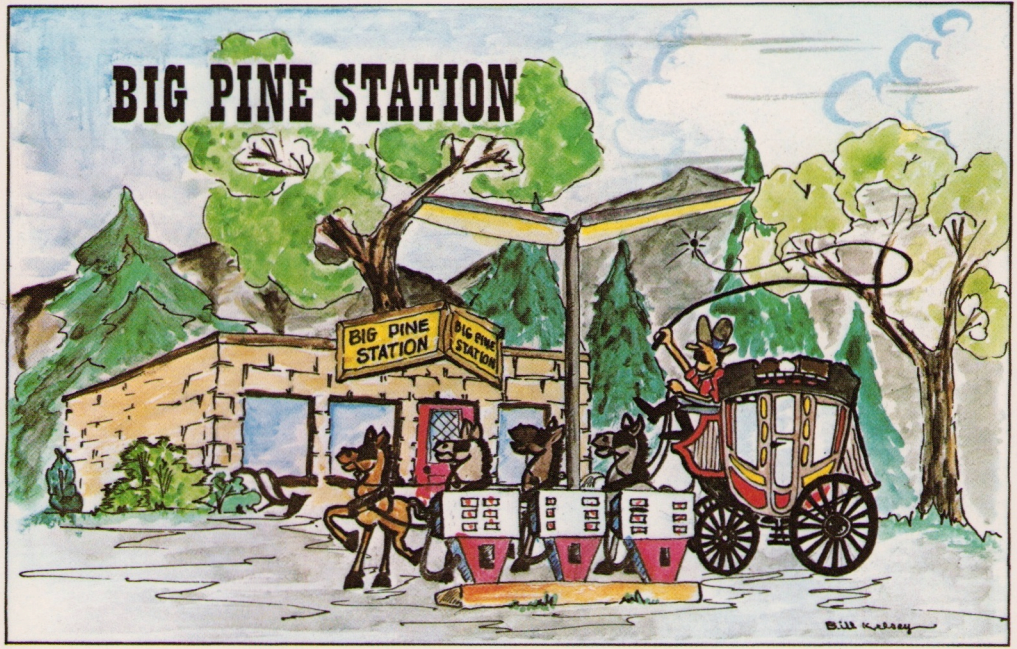
FREE

BIG PINE

VISITOR'S GUIDE



- Fishing
- Campgrounds
- Sites to See
- Maps
- And much more


BIG PINE STATION
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Bill Kelsey

MAKE YOUR DESTINATION

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Big Pine, California 93513
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GLACIER PACK TRAIN

(760) 938-2538

PALISADE GLACIER REGION

The Palisade Crest, elevation over 14,000 feet, forms the backbone of the Sierra. Along its summit are Temple Creg, Mt. Agassiz, Mt. Winchell, Mt. sill, North and Middle Palisade . . . often used by seasoned and properly equipped rock climbers. Many glaciers and lakes are formed below. The Palisades Glaciers are the most southerly in the continental U.S. and largest in the Sierra.

"BIG PINE CANYON IS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF THE EASTERN APPROACHES TO THE SIERRA . . . STARR'S GUIDE."

Fishing & Pack Trips

- **BIG PINE LAKES**
- **PALISADE GLACIERS**
- **SAWMILL PASS**
  Woods Lake - Pinchot Pass - Bench Lake
- **BAKER LAKES**
- **DAY RIDES-LOOP TRIP TO UPPER LAKES**
- **DEER SEASON**

IN BEAUTIFUL BIG PINE CANYON

Types

• SPOT • DUNNAGE • BASE CAMP

Rates . . .

	PER DAY
Packer and Horse	190.00
Saddle Horse or Pack Mule	90.00
125 - 150 pounds per mule	
Day Rides	90.00

LOCATION . . . .

Pack Station is located 11 miles west of Big Pine on paved road.

SERVICES AVAILABLE . . . .

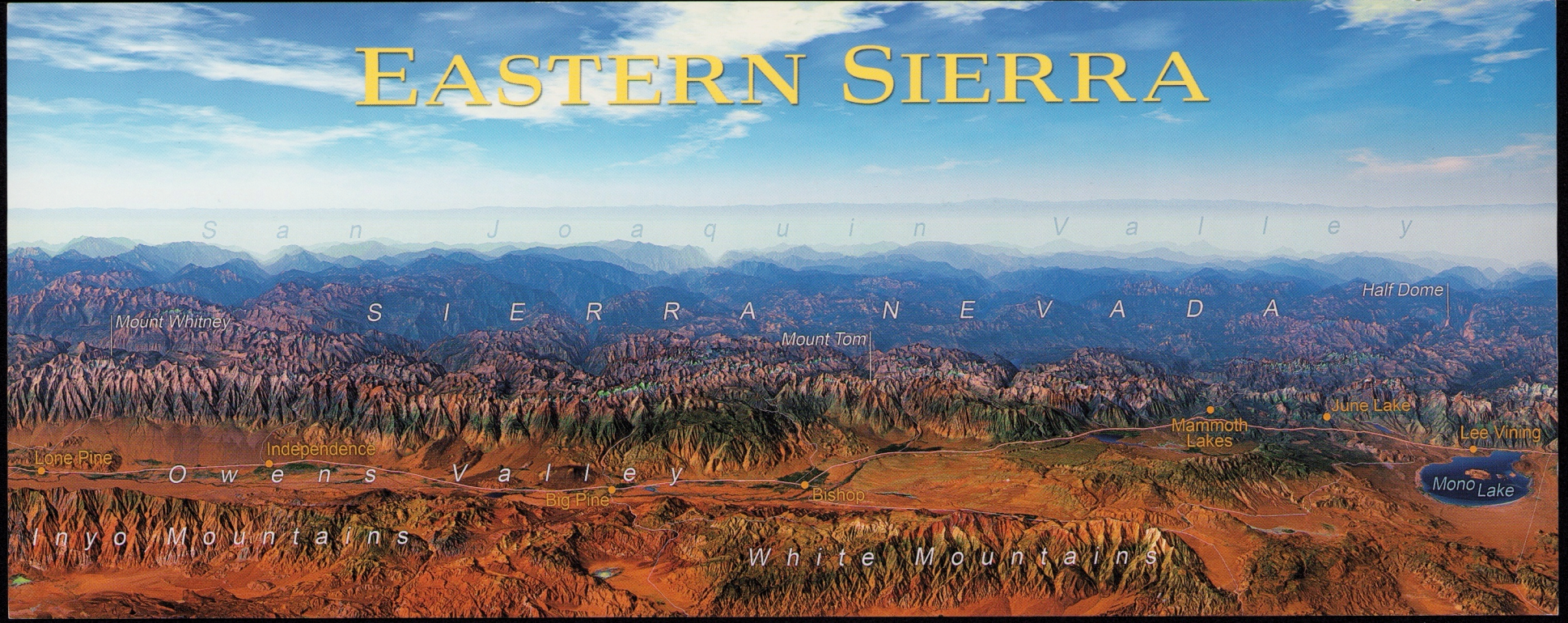
Glacier Lodge, Store, Cabins & Restaurant. Public Campgrounds

GLACIER PACK TRAIN

M.A. STEWART
P.O. Box 321, County Road, Big Pine, CA 93513
760-938-2538

Wilderness Permits are available to our guests. Operating under permits from Inyo National Forest. Members Eastern Sierra Packers Association, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

EASTERN SIERRA



EASTERN SIERRA

The Sierra Nevada mountains embrace a vast tract of scenic wildlands running through the heart of California. Its rugged mountains and granite peaks are surpassed only by the delicate beauty of natures handy-work found within.
Photographer - Eric Knight

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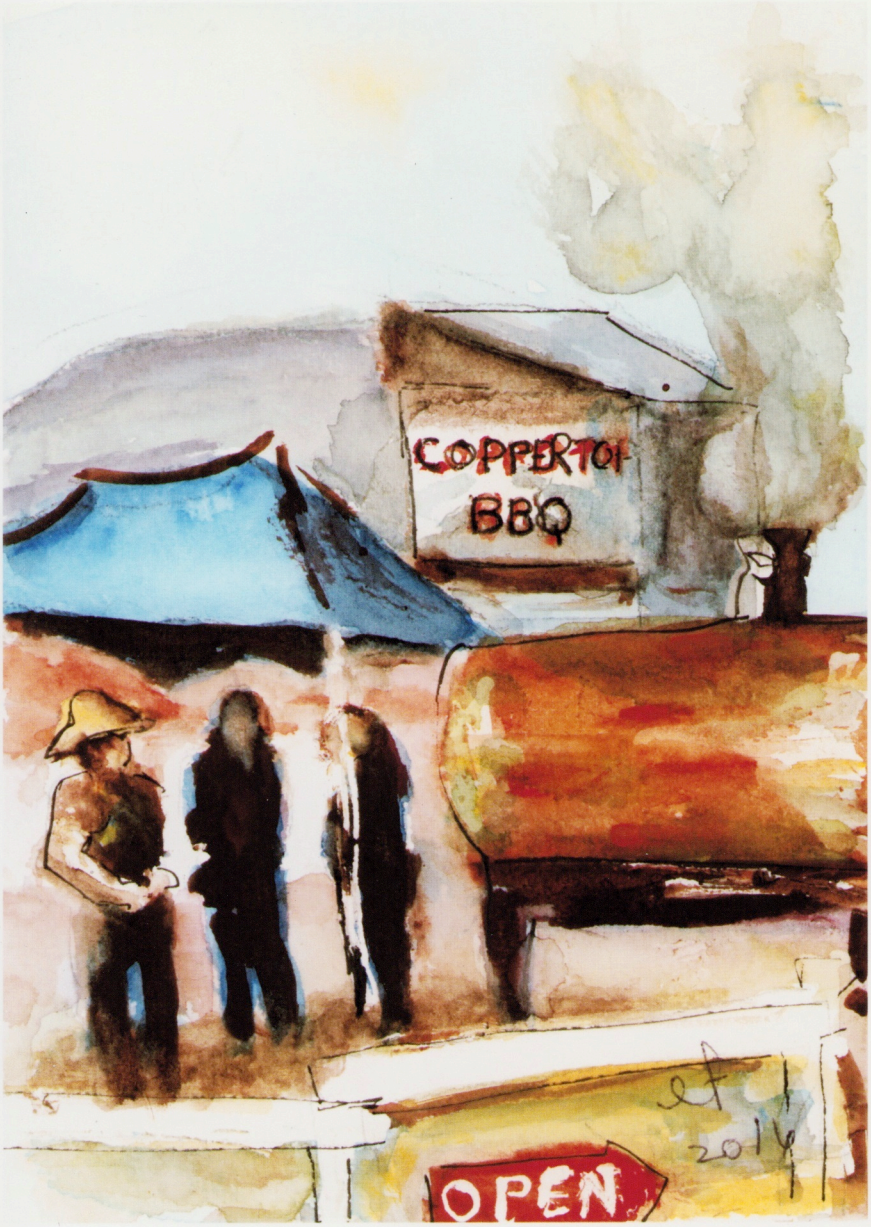
Country KITCHEN
TACOS
OPEN
OPEN
2016

Big Pine Tree 1920

John Haugard
Rafael Rossi Where highway goes over Malgarde


COPPERTOI
BBQ
OPEN

Captain Davidson reported that the first signs of Native Americans that he encountered in the Owens Valley were empty dwellings because the inhabitants had fled from his soldiers, believing they were dangerous.

Photo by A.A. Forbes/Courtesy Eastern California Museum

Photo by Jeremiah Caudill

Temple Crag looms above and outside of the small town of Big Pine.

GLACIER LODGE

• Fully Equipped Cabins • R.V. Park / Full Hookups • Campsites with BBQ • Overnight parking for hikers • General Store • Trout pond and great fishing

CALL (760) 938-2837 • 760-920-0492

FOR INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS
GLACIER LODGE
P.O. BOX 370 • BIG PINE,CA 93513
www.jewelofthesierra.com • glacierlodge395@aol.com
Located on USDA Forest Service Land
11 miles West off Hwy. 395. Turn west on Crocker St. in Big Pine

Nestled just under 8,000 feet in the Eastern High Sierra. The John Muir Trail, Palisades Glaciers and Temple Crag are all a short hike away. Hiking, fishing, horseback riding, and "Kodak Moments" are everywhere!
With over a hundred thousand acres of wilderness terrain to explore, our seasonal colors of spring, summer and autumn are always bursting at the seams.

Wilderness & Guided Tours

- Back Country Access
- Horse Pack Trips
- Backpacking
- Sierra Stream Fishing
- Hiking
- Inyo National Forest
- Camping
- High Sierra Lakes
- Bristlecone Pine Forest
- John Muir Trail
- Palisades Glacier
- Temple Crag Rock Climbing
- Desert Wildflowers
- Bird Watching

Dogs and other pets are welcome, and campfires, if used carefully, are allowed in the pits outside each cabin.

006.jpg Open with

MEMORIAL DAY 2023

"Piper vs Big Pine Unified School District"

June 2, 1924

The design on Alices grave marker is taken from the design on our traditional willow baskets. My theory is the design represents the high peaks of the mountains to the west of our homeland. The high peaks, according to several individual Indian elders who lived their lives in our homeland, is the source from which our ancestors drew their power for strength and resilience.

The white man named the peaks, from north to south, Piper, Temple Craig, the peaks above the Palisades Glacier, Kid, Split, Birch and Black Mountains (Toyabi).

Prior to June 2, 1924 the Indian children throughout California could not attend public school. A reason given for segregating Indian children, their parents do not pay property taxes. On or about 1900 the Indian community of Big Pine collectively purchased a house along Big Pine Creek and started a school for their children. (The school was located west, just before where School Street crosses Big Pine creek)

On or about 1905 a Federal Day School was started for the Indian children in our communities. These schools ended at the 6th grade. Another reason for Indian children not allowed to attend public school changed. If there is a Federal school within 3 miles of a public school, the Indians go to the Federal school.(systematic racism)

In 1923 Pike Piper a member of the Big Pine Indian community, Alice's father, filed a law suit against Big Pine Unified School District for denying Alice admission into the public school, even though she completed the 6th grade. On June 2, 1924 a favorable decision was reached for Mr. Piper by the California Supreme Court. Six Indian youth, Alice Piper, Ike Baker, Jeff Tibbits, others not identifyed yet entered the Big Pine public school. Alice graduated from high school at Polytec High School in Los Angelis in 1930. After graduation, she worked various jobs, YMCA, interpreter with Bishop Paiute tribe Then Alicq spent 25 years at the Stewart Indian School in Carson City, Nevada. She dedicated her lifes work to helping Indian youth preserve their culture and dignity as a Boys Dormitory matron. She retired in 1968 and returned to her home land in Big Pine.

Alice passed away on August 22, 1985 at the age of 77, 38 years ago. Our family, in Honor of this Brave and Resilient young lady, decided to have a marker placed at her grave site at Woodman Cemetery. Because of her father Pike Pipers decision to file the law suite 5 generations of us would not have a public school education. When you take flowers on Memorial Day to Woodman, please leave a flower for Alice, as a Thank You. Her grave site is the first grave on the right as you enter the cemetery. (Site marked with ribbons on a red pole)

On 2014 a memorial was unveiled in front of the Big Pine Unified School. This historic event was made possible by the efforts of Sage and Shannon Romero. Their commitment to the many hours of coordinating the development of the sculpture image, having it placed and generating the funds to have the project completed is a testament to their commitment to ensure our historical neritage is not forgotten.

AND, our sister Margret Romero has a new marker. Visit her site and leave a flower and a prayer of thanks for comforting the many children in time of need working for Indian Child Welfare for 20 years.

"watch this space".....Rachel Maddow, MSNBC

Lets not forget why Memorial Day is a significant day. After the Civil War, in 1866 the Union Army (North) established a day to honor their fallen soldiers after the war. This Day has evolved into a time to Honor all our deceased soldiers, a time of remembrance and reflection of deceased family and community members. Our family gatherings was a time of gathering flowers grown in our yards, matching them with the specific individual likes of deceased family members. Grandpa Bob Piper liked the flowers that grew wild. After we ate outside time was spent enjoying family.

Currently our Big Pine Indian community has approximately 45 deceased soldiers to remember.

Flag raising at 8am in HONOR of our deceased VETERANS. at the Elders Building. Come and share your thoughts. Snacks will be provided.

#BIGPINEHISTORY

Website: https://www.facebook.com/AlicePiperMemorial?milbextide=ZbwWKwl

Note: Looking for pictures of Alice. Email davelrambeau@gmail.com

Alice 1924 - 2024

US
Postage
Paid

EDDM

Postal Customer
Big Pine, California
93513

Stone house RUINS

Little Pine Creek

2014

Above Big Pine

BIG PINE

COME PLAY IN OUR BACKYARD

The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest and the Palisade Glacier.

While in Big Pine be sure to pick up more information about great fishing and camping at these main street businesses

Carroll's Market

Mt. View Video and Gifts

Rossi's Steak and Spaghetti Restaurant

Roy's Gun and Tackle

Big Pine Chevron Mini Mart & Car Wash

High Country Market and Hardware

Jeff's Country Kitchen

Big Pine Chamber and Visitors Center

Uncle Bud's

Final Touch

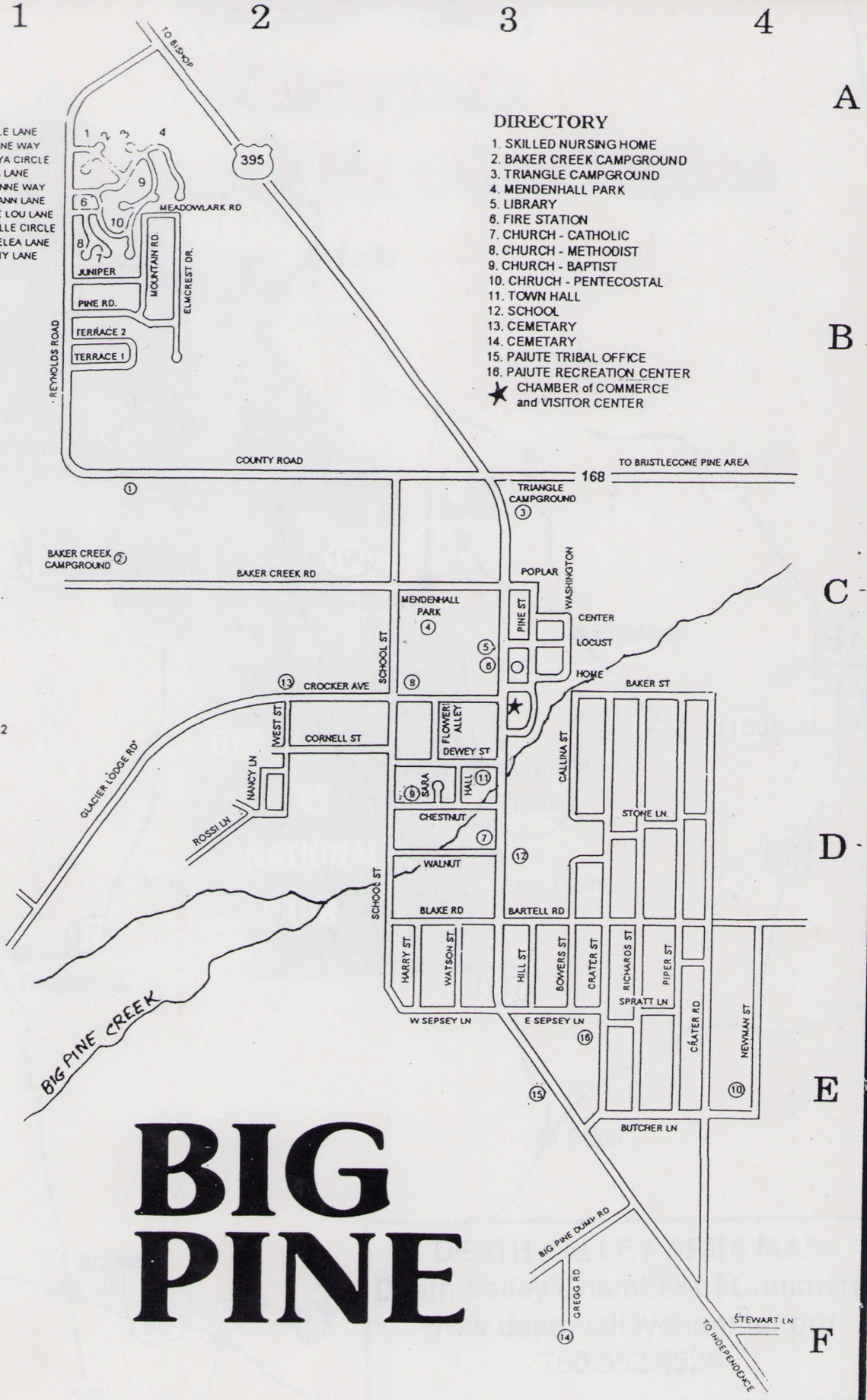
Thomas Gallery

Art From the Heart Gallery and Custom Gifts

The Antique Hotel

Big Pine 76

www.bigpine.com



BIG PINE

BIG PINE STREET INDEX

BAKER CREEK RD C1-3
BAKER LN. C3-4
BARTELL RE. D3-4
BETTIE LOU LN. B2
BIG PINE DUMP RD. F3
BLAKE RD. D3
BOWERS ST. D-E
BUTCHER LN. E3
CALLINA ST. C-D3
CARMELEA LN. A-B2
CENTER ST. C3
CHESTNUT ST. D3
CORNELL ST. D2-3
COUNTRY RD. C1-3
CRATER ST. C-E3
CROCKER ST. C2-3
DEWEY ST. C3
ELMCREST DR. B2
FLOWER ALLEY C3
GLACIER LODGE RD. D1-2
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WALNUT ST D2-3
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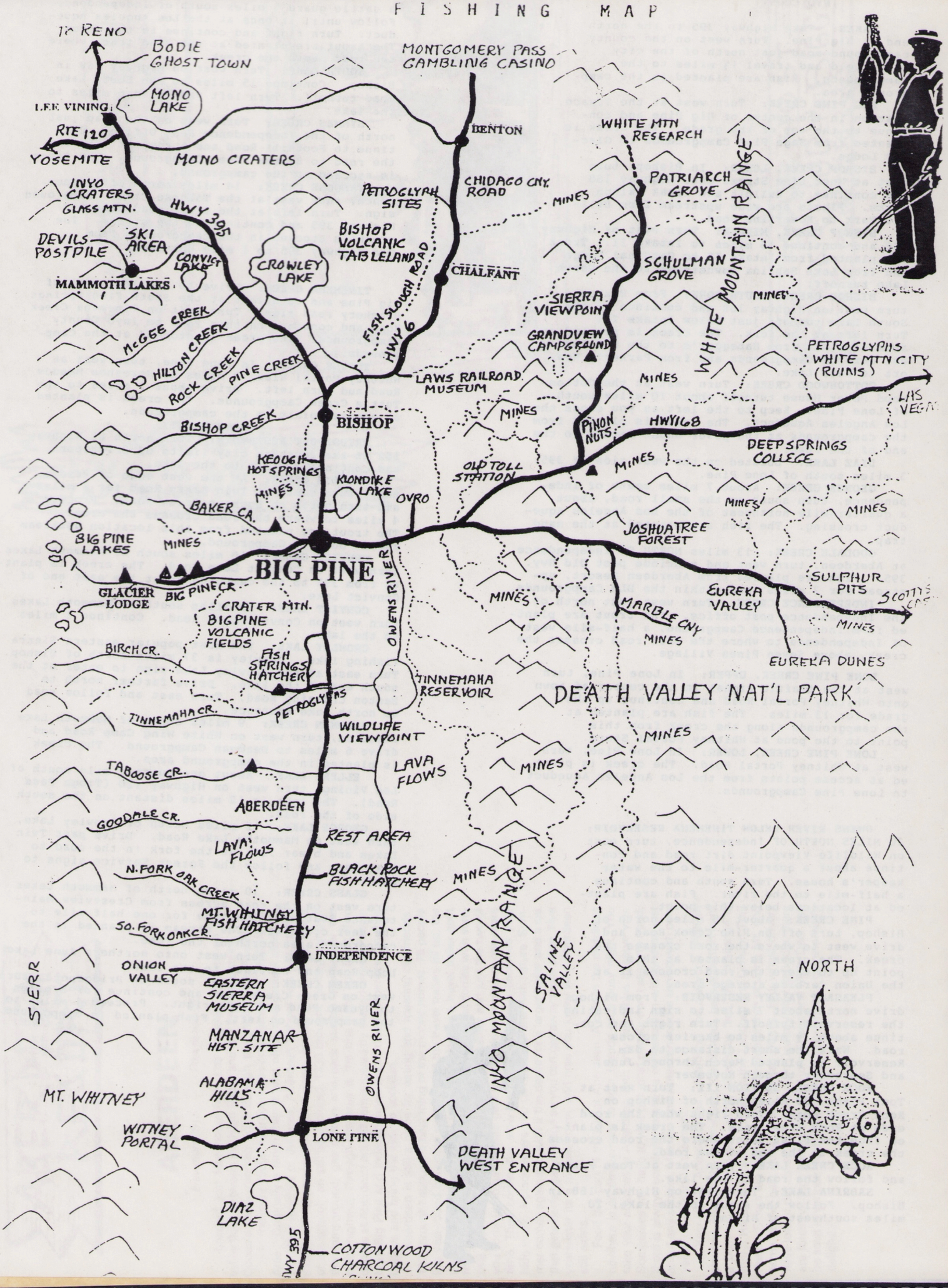
WEST ST D2

FISHING MAP


TO RENO
BODIE GHOST TOWN
MONO LAKE
LEE VINING
RTE 120
YOSEMITE
MONO CRATERS
INYO CRATERS
GLASS MTN.
HWY 395
DEVILS POSTPILE
SKI AREA
CONVICT LAKE
MAMMOTH LAKES
CROWLEY LAKE
McGEE CREEK
HILTON CREEK
ROCK CREEK
PINE CREEK
BISHOP CREEK
MONTGOMERY PASS GAMBLING CASINO
BENTON
CHICAGO CNY. ROAD
PETROGLYPH SITES
BISHOP VOLCANIC TABLELAND
FISH SLOUGH ROAD
HWY 6
CHALFANT
LAWS RAILROAD MUSEUM
BISHOP
KEOUGH HOT SPRINGS
KLONDIKE LAKE
OVRO
BAKER CR.
BIG PINE LAKES
MINES
BIG PINE
GLACIER LODGE
BIG PINE CR.
CRATER MTN.
BIG PINE VOLCANIC FIELDS
BIRCH CR.
FISH SPRINGS HATCHERY
OWENS RIVER
TINNEMAHA RESERVOIR
TINNEMAHA CR.
PETROGLYPHS
WILDLIFE VIEWPOINT
TABOOSE CR.
LAVA FLOWS
ABERDEEN
GOODALE CR.
REST AREA
LAVA FLOWS
N. FORK OAK CREEK
BLACK ROCK FISH HATCHERY
MT. WHITNEY FISH HATCHERY
SO. FORK OAK CR.
INDEPENDENCE
ONION VALLEY
EASTERN SIERRA MUSEUM
SIERRA
MANZANAR HIST. SITE
ALABAMA HILLS
MT. WHITNEY
WITNEY PORTAL
LONE PINE
DIAZ LAKE
HWY 395
COTTONWOOD CHARCOAL KILNS
INYO MOUNTAIN RANGE
SALINE VALLEY
WHITE MTN RESEARCH
PATRIARCH GROVE
SCHULMAN GROVE
WHITE MOUNTAIN RANGE
SIERRA VIEWPOINT
GRANDVIEW CAMPGROUND
PINON NUTS
HWY 168
OLD TOLL STATION
PETROGLYPHS
WHITE MTN CITY (RUINS)
LAS VEGAS
DEEPSPRINGS COLLEGE
JOSHUA TREE FOREST
EUREKA VALLEY
MARBLE CNY.
SULPHUR PITS
SCOTTS CR.
EUREKA DUNES
DEATH VALLEY NAT'L PARK
DEATH VALLEY WEST ENTRANCE
NORTH

INYO COUNTY

BAKER: Take Highway 395 to the north end of Big Pine. Turn west on the county campground road just north of the city ball field and travel 1½ miles to the campgrounds. Fish are planted in the campground area.

BIG PINE CREEK: Turn west at the Texaco station in the center of Big Pine and continue to the top of the grade. The creek is planted from Sage Flat Campgrounds to Glacier Lodge.

BISHOP CREEK, LOWER: In Bishop, turn west at West Line Street onto Highway 168 and continue to Bullpit and Izaak Walton parks. Plants are made upstream from Bullpit Park to Powerline Road.

BISHOP CREEK, MIDDLE: Turn west of Highway 168 and continue 15 miles to Intake II. Trout are planted from Intake II to Cardinal Lodge and from Lake Sabrina downstream to the North Lake turnoff.

BISHOP CREEK, SOUTH FORK: From Bishop, turn west on Highway 168 and continue to the South Lake turnoff just below Intake II. Turn left at the fork. The creek is planted at access points from Habegger's to the U.S Forest Service Campgrounds and from Parker's Resort to Weir Lake.

COTTONWOOD CREEK: Turn west at the Cottonwood Power House turnoff about 10 miles south of Lone Pine. Keep to the left as you cross the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The creek is planted from the campgrounds at the power house intake to the end of the road.

DIAZ LAKE: Located on the west side of 395, 3 miles south of Lone Pine.

GEORGE CREEK: About 7 miles south of Independence, turn south on the small road, about a quarter-mile northwest of the Los Angeles Aqueduct crossing. The fish are planted at the sand trap.

GOODALE CREEK: 13 miles NORTH OF Independence at Aberdeen, turn west and continue past Old Hwy. 395. Fish are planted from Aberdeen Resort, upstream for 2 miles, and within the BLM Campgrounds.

INDEPENDENCE CREEK: Turn west just north of the Independence post office. The trout are planted from Independence Campground, a half-mile west of Independence to where the main road crosses the creek, above Seven Pines Village.

LONE PINE CREEK, UPPER: In Lone Pine, turn west at the traffic signal in the center of town onto Whitney Portal Road and continue up the grade for 13 miles. The fish are planted at the campgrounds along the creek from this point to the pond at Whitney Portal Store.

LONE PINE CREEK, LOWER: In Lone Pine, turn west at Whitney Portal Road. The creek is planted at access points from the Los Angeles Aqueduct to Lone Pine Campgrounds.

OWENS RIVER BELOW TINEMEHA RESERVOIR: 20 MILES NORTH OF Independence, turn east on Wildlife Viewpoint dirt road and continue about a quarter-mile to the water keeper's house. Turn south and continue a half-mile to the river. Fish are planted at locations below this point.

PINE CREEK: About 15 miles north of Bishop, turn off on Pine Creek Road and drive west to where the road crosses the creek. The creek is planted at this point up to where the road crosses it at the Union Carbide storage area.

PLEASANT VALLEY RESERVOIR: From Bishop drive north about 7 miles to sign indicating the reservoir turnoff. Turn right and continue about 1½ miles to barrier across road. Walk the short distance to dam. Reservoir is planted March through June, and September through November.

ROCK CREEK, SECTION III: Turn west at Toms Place, 30 miles north of Bishop on Rock Creek Road. Turn right when the road ends at Rock Creek Lake. The creek is planted from the first point where the road crosses the creek to the end of the road.

ROCK CREEK LAKE: Turn west at Toms Place and follow the road to the lake.

SABRINA LAKE: Turn west on Highway 168 in Bishop. Follow the signs to the lake, 20 miles southwest of Bishop.

SHEPERD CREEK: Turn east at the [illegible] a cattle guard 5 miles south of Independence. Follow until it ends at the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Turn right and continue to the creek. The trout are planted at the sand trap, where the road meets the creek.

SOUTH LAKE: Turn west on Highway 168 in Bishop. Continue 15 miles to the South Lake Road turnoff. Turn left and drive 6 miles to the lake.

SYMMES CREEK: Turn west on the road just north of the Independence Post Office. Continue to Foothill Road and turn left. Follow the road to Symmes Creek Campground. The creek is stocked at the campground.

TABOOSE CREEK: 14 miles north of Independence, turn west at the Taboose Creek Campground sign. Turn left at the first road past Old Highway 395 and continue to the stream. The creek is stocked in the campgrounds from Old Highway 395 to 1 mile upstream.

TINEMEHA CREEK: Drive to 8 miles south of Big Pine and turn west at the South Fish Springs Hatchery road sign. Turn left on Tinemeha Creek Road and continue on this road to Inyo County Campgrounds. The creek is stocked at the Campgrounds.

TUTTLE CREEK: In Lone Pine, turn west at Whitney Portal Rlad, 3 miles to Horeshoe Meadow Road and turn left. Drive about 2 miles to the Tuttle Creek Campgrounds. The creek is planted at access points in the campgrounds.

MONO COUNTY

BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR: Turn north at Highway 182 at the southern city limits of Bridgeport and continue 3 miles to the lake.

BUCKEYE CREEK: At the west edge of Bridgeport, turn south at Twin Lakes Road for 8 miles and turn north on Buckeye Creek Road. Proceed 4 miles to where the road crosses the creek. The trout are planted from this location upstream and in Buckeye Campground.

CONVICT CREEK: 10 miles south of Mammoth Lakes, turn west on Convict Lake Road. The creek is planted from 395 to the campgrounds at the east end of Convict Lake.

CONVICT LAKE: 10 miles south of Mammoth Lakes turn west on Convict Lake Road. Continue 2 miles to the lake.

CROWLEY LAKE: The most popular eastern Sierra fishing lake. Crowley is 37 miles north of Bishop. Turn east at the Crowley Lake sign to enter at the south end of the lake. Drive farther north to Benton Crossing Road. Turn east and follow road to north lake entrance.

DEADMAN CREEK: 9 miles north of Mammoth Lake Junction, turn west on White Wing Camp Road and drive 6 miles to Deadman Campground. The creek is planted in the campground area.

ELLERY LAKE: About one quarter mile south of Lee Vining, turn west on Highway 120 (Tioga Pass Road). The lake is 12 miles distant on the south side of the road.

GEORGE LAKE: 12 miles north of Crowley Lake, turn west on Mammothe Lake Road. Drive past Twin Lakes and bear left at the fork in the road to Lake Mary and follow the Forest Service signs to Lake.

GLASS CREEK: 10 miles north of Mammoth Lakes turn west on the road across from Crestview Maintenance Station. Continue for one half mile to the deer crossing. The stream is planted in the campground area north of the road.

GRANT LAKE: Turn west onto northern June Lake Loop Road and continue to the lake.

GREEN CREEK: 5 miles south of Bridgeport, turn west on Green Creek Road and continue for 8 miles to Dynamo Pond and turn right. Proceed 4 miles to the campground on left. Fish planted in campground.

ABERDEEN RESORT

ABERDEEN

Elevation 3915 *Population 75*

Located just four hours from Los Angeles. Nestled on the valley floor between the High Sierra and the Inyo Mountains with Goodale creek running right through the middle sits Aberdeen.

In the early 1900s Aberdeen was considered the "Hub of the Area." Originally a ranch then a post office and general store for the other ranches of the area. Aberdeen School was just up the street, with approximately 25 students, grades one thru 12. Ruins of the school can still be explored. 1930 brought the beginning of the campground, gas station and pack station. Remember the main highway through the area is the one right out front. The dances at Aberdeen are still remembered by the old timers. People from Big Pine and Independence would ride to Aberdeen in their buggys and bring the kids to socialize.

Aberdeen is still a place for eating and meeting old friends. 1970 brought about the beginning of the mobile homes. 75 people live year-round but come summer and the travel trailers fill up, the population swells to 150. It seems people take a travel trailer spot for the summer, and enjoy all the excitement that comes with summer vacation—then comes the cooler weather and just the two of you come up to gather your gear but decide to come just one more time. Then comes the slow pace and Aberdeen becomes your hide-away. A place where you can become one with nature. Summer comes again and with it the desire for a larger trailer and a car that gets better gas mileage so you can get away more often. Five years later its a mobile home, and now you know why Aberdeen still exists.

Food is a part of the fun at Aberdeen. A cafe in the middle of nowhere is an amazement to your friends on a busy night. You take your chances at Aberdeen with only ten tables to serve you. Sometimes you have to wait but most people don't seem to mind, there is always someone to start a conversation with and on just about any subject. Mexican and American food is served with conversation as part of the menu.

Year-round Aberdeen has something for everyone. Fish in streams, lakes or the Owens River. Catch trout, bass or catfish from a boat or with wadders, using worms or flies, the challenge is there! Hikers are midway between the Taboose and Division Trail Heads. Skiers are just one hour from Mammoth or June Mt. and some of the best skiing in the United States. Four-wheel drivers have lots of dirt roads to explore from Death Valley to Bodie, there are forestry roads galore! Elk, Big Horn Sheep and Mule Deer can be seen at various locations within just a few miles, a cameraman's delight!

ABERDEEN
STAR ROUTE 1 BOX 106
INDEPENDENCE, CA. 93526

ABERDEEN RESORT

YOUR HOST
DON & JUDY BIGGS
PH. (619) 938-2663

Points of Interest

1 **Eastern California Museum** on Grant Street in Independence, houses displays that include Indian basketry and other Indian handiwork, early farm and mining equipment, an extensive photo collection, a library of local history and a reconstructed pioneer village. Books of local interest are on sale. The museum is open 10 to 4 Monday through Saturday and 12 to 5 Sunday. Admission is free, although donations are welcome.

2 **Commander's House** was the lavish residence of the commanding officer of Camp Independence. It was constructed in 1872 to replace earthquake-damaged location in 1883 after the camp's demise. Open Sunday 1 to 4:45 March through October.

3 **Mount Whitney State Fish Hatchery** produces some 25 million trout eggs each year and raises about 4 million fingerlings for planting in lakes and streams. Visitors can observe the operations from 8 to 4 daily; grounds open 8 to 5 daily.

4 **Black Rock State Fish Hatchery** raises trout for planting in roadside streams. More than 650,000 catchable-size fish are nurtured here annually. Operations are open to the public daily from 8 to 4.

5 **Fish Springs State Fish Hatchery** raises more than 1½ million catchable-size trout each year. The elongated holding tanks can be viewed from 8 to 4 daily.

6 **Palisade Glacier** is one of the southernmost glaciers in the nation. The white mass can be seen from late spring through fall by peering to the west from Big Pine. A rugged five-hour hike is the only way to reach the glacier's base.

Campgrounds

A **Independence Creek** el 3900. ½ mi. W of Independence on Onion Valley Rd. 25 tent or RV spaces. Pit toilets, stream water. Open all year. $3.

B **Symmes Creek** el 5185. 6 mi. SW of Independence off Onion Valley Rd. 55 tent or RV spaces (30-ft. RV limit). Pit toilets, piped water, tables, stoves. Open May thru Oct. No fee.

C **Oak Creek** el 5000. 5½ mi. W of Independence. 19 tent and 5 RV spaces (22-ft. RV limit). Flush toilets, piped water, tables, stoves. Open all year. $5.

D **Onion Valley** el 9200. 14 mi. W of Independence on Onion Valley Rd. 29 tent spaces. Flush toilets, piped water, tables, stoves. Open May thru Sept. $5.

E **Gray's Meadow** el 6000. 5 mi. W of Independence on Onion Valley Rd. 52 tent or RV spaces (22-ft RV limit). Flush toilets, piped water, tables, stoves. Open Apr. thru Oct. $6.

F **Taboose** el 4000. 12½ mi. S of Big Pine off US 395. 45 tent or RV spaces. Pit toilets, stream water, tables, stoves. Open all year. $3.

G **Tinemaha** el 4000. 7 mi. S of Big Pine, 2½ mi. W of US 395. 45 tent or RV spaces. Pit toilets, well water, tables, stoves. Open all year. $3.

H **Goodale Creek** el 4100. 14 mi. NW of Independence off US 395. 62 tent or RV spaces. Pit toilets, stream water, tables, stoves. Open June thru Sept. No fee.

I **Big Pine Creek** el 7700. 10 mi. W of Big Pine on Glacier Lodge Rd. 12 tent and 24 RV spaces (22-ft. RV limit). Vault toilets, piped water, tables, stoves. Open May thru Oct. $6.

J **Big Pine Triangle** el 4000. ½ mi. N of Big Pine at junction of US 395 and SR 168. 30 tent or RV spaces. Flush toilets, piped water, tables, stoves. Open mid-Apr. thru Nov. $3.

K **Baker Creek** el 4100. 1 mi. W of Big Pine on Poplar St. 25 tent or RV spaces. Pit toilets, stream water, tables, stoves. Open all year. $3.

L **Sage Flat** el 7400. 8 mi. SW of Big Pine on Glacier Lodge Rd. 32 tent or RV spaces (22-ft. RV limit). Pit toilets, stream water, tables, stoves. Open Apr. thru Nov. No fee.

R REST AREA

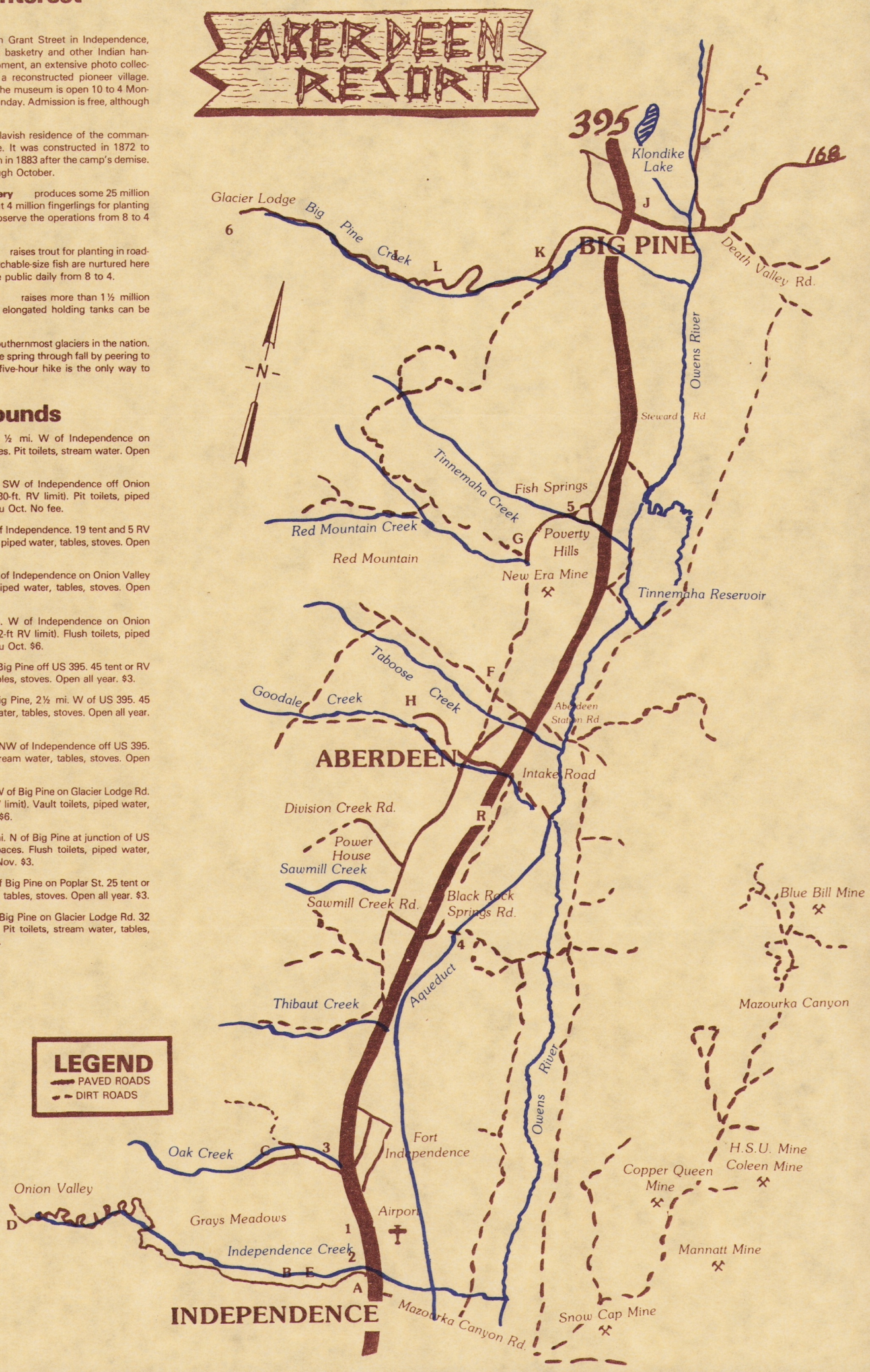
dump station
drinking water
telephone

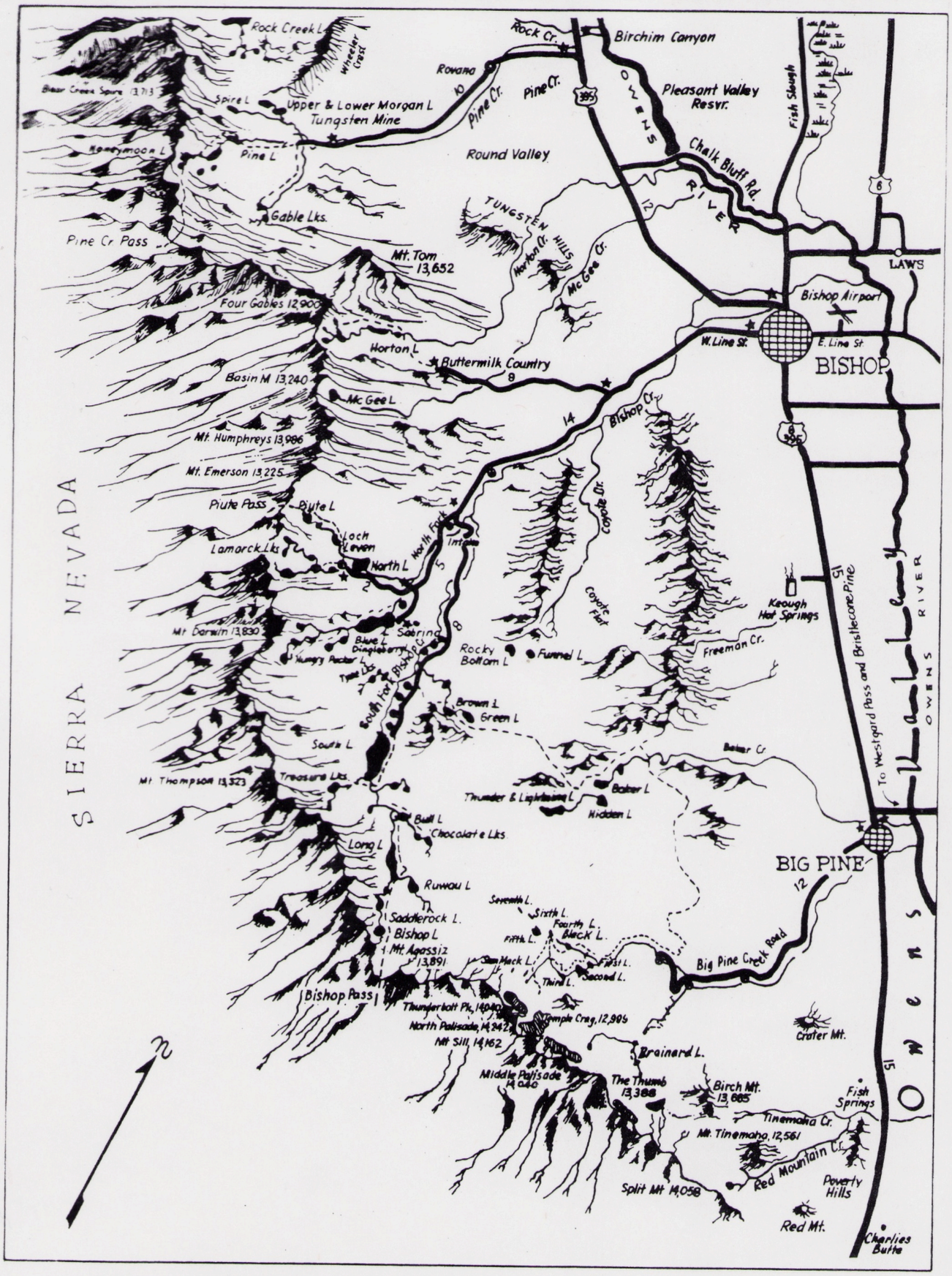
ABERDEEN

drinking water
telephone
ice
fishing supplies
limited groceries
food storage for hikers
mail box
cafe

TRAIL HEADS

big pine lakes
taboose
division creek
sawmill pass
baxter pass
keasarge pass

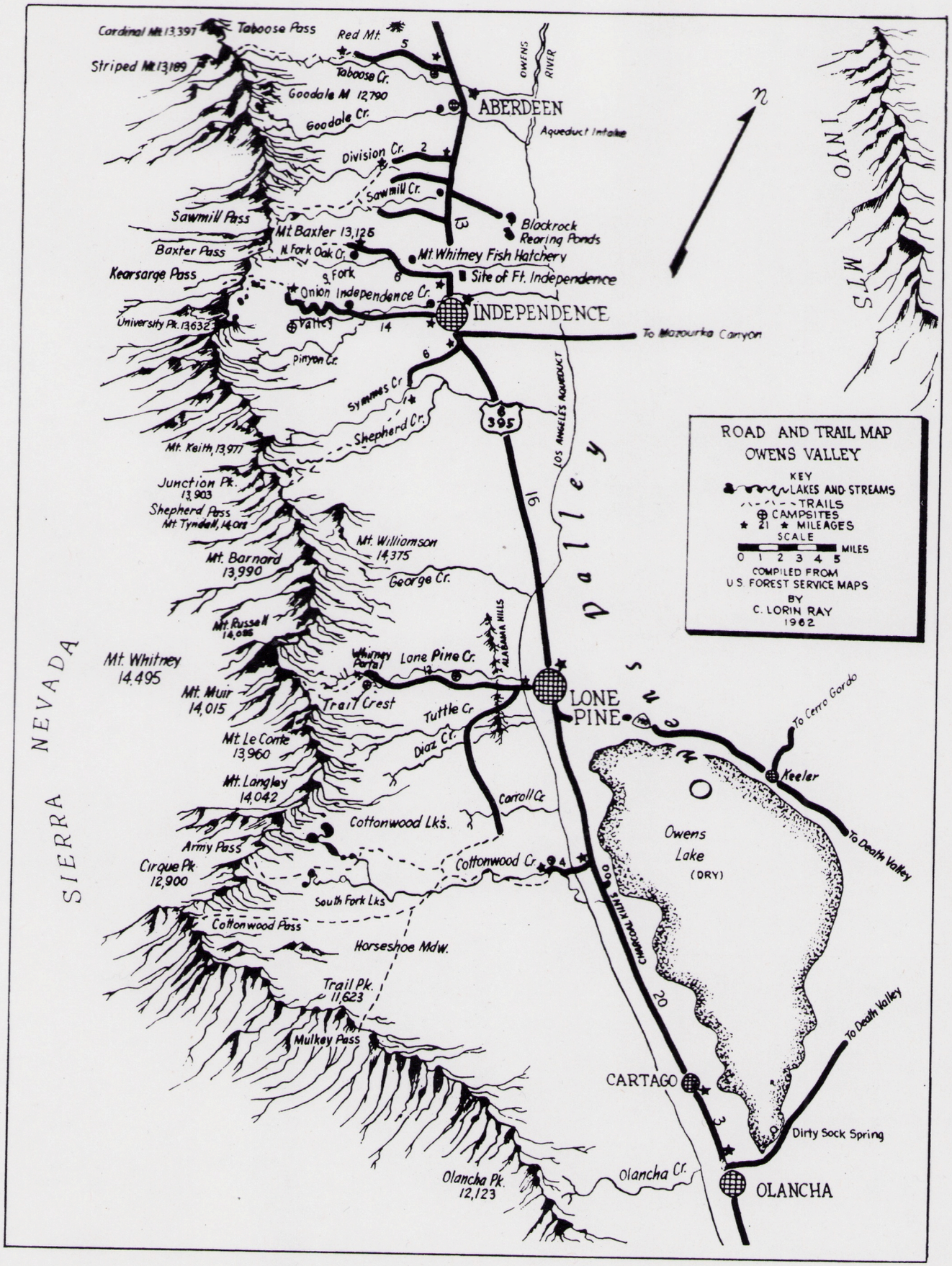




The eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada is a striking contrast to the broad gentle western slope of only a few degrees. Starting at the head of Owens Valley west of Bishop the highest peaks along the crest of the Sierra Nevada seem to rise vertically above the valley. However, the average measurement of the eastern face is about 30 degrees.

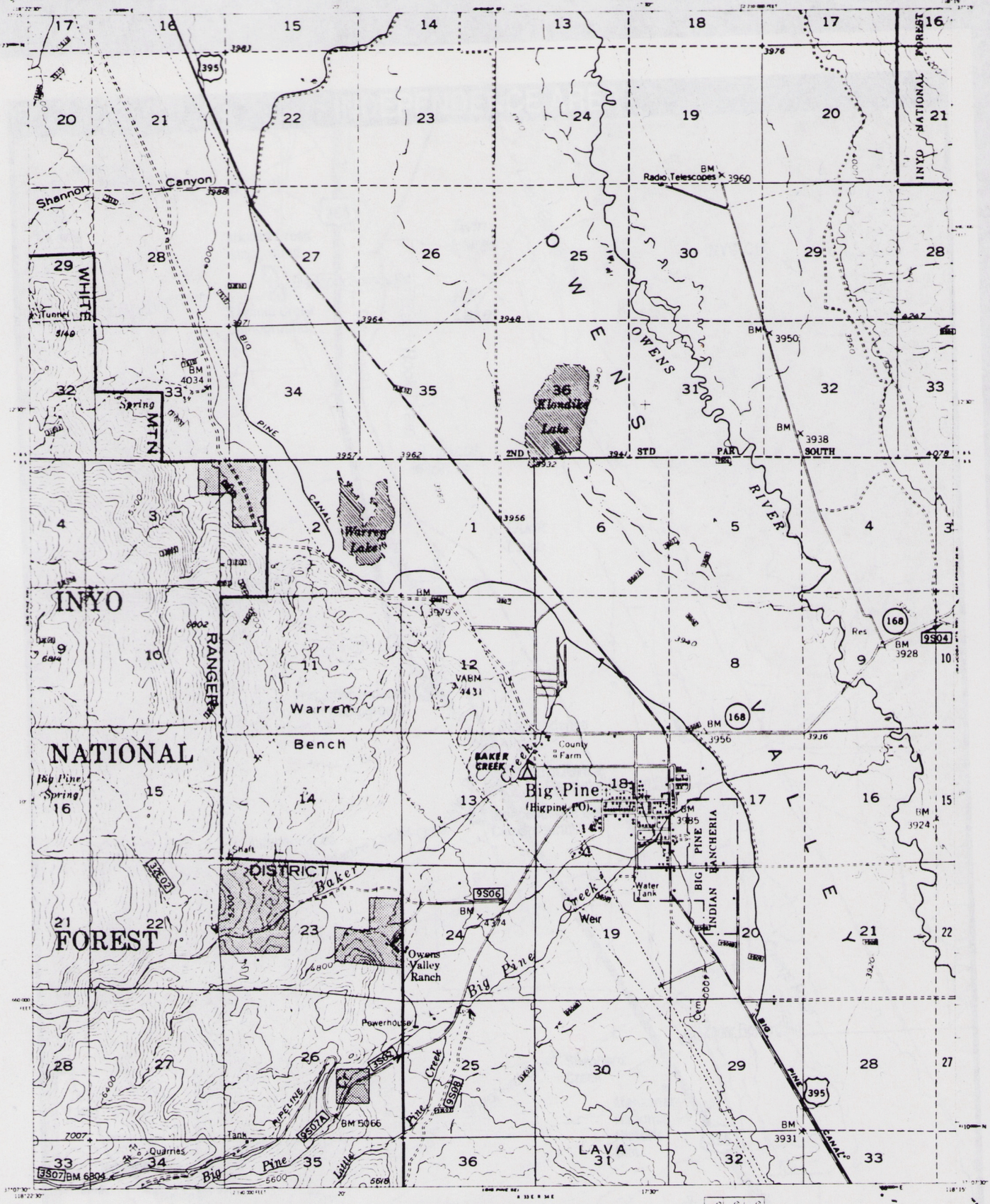
is visible from the valley floor **only at** Lone Pine.

The most conspicuous **and imposing** peaks seen from Owens Valley are Mount Williamson (14,384 feet), Mount Langley **(14,042 feet)**, and Lone Pine Peak (12,944). Lone Pine Peak appears to be higher than **Mount Whitney.** Adapted from *Evolution of the California Landscape*, 1952, Division of Mines Bulletin **158. See** *Letters to the Editor*, p. 191.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
CALIFORNIA REGION

BIG PINE NE QUADRANGLE
MT DIABLO MERIDIAN
INYO CO CALIFORNIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES



CONTOUR INTERVAL 80 FEET
Datum is mean sea level

Polyconic projection—1927 North American datum
10 000 foot grid based on California coordinate system, zone 4
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 11.

Mapped, edited and published by the
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Prepared by U.S. Forest Service Geomatronics Service Center, Salt Lake City, Utah, utilizing 1978 field checked compilation guides. Additions and revisions by photogrammetric methods from U.S.F.S. aerial photography. This map does not comply with national map accuracy standards. It is an intermediate edition intended to provide standard coverage and was converted from U.S.G.S. 15 : 1 48 000 Compilation Manuscripts (1950).

LOCATION AND NATIONAL FOREST

LEGEND

- National Forest Boundary
- Alienated lands within the National Forest boundary
- Heavy Duty Road
- Medium Duty Road
- Improved Road
- Unimproved Road
- Forest Service Road location approx
- Forest Service Recreation Site
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Forest Road
- Forest Trail
- Trail
- Forest Service Trail location approx
- Recreation Site other than Forest Service

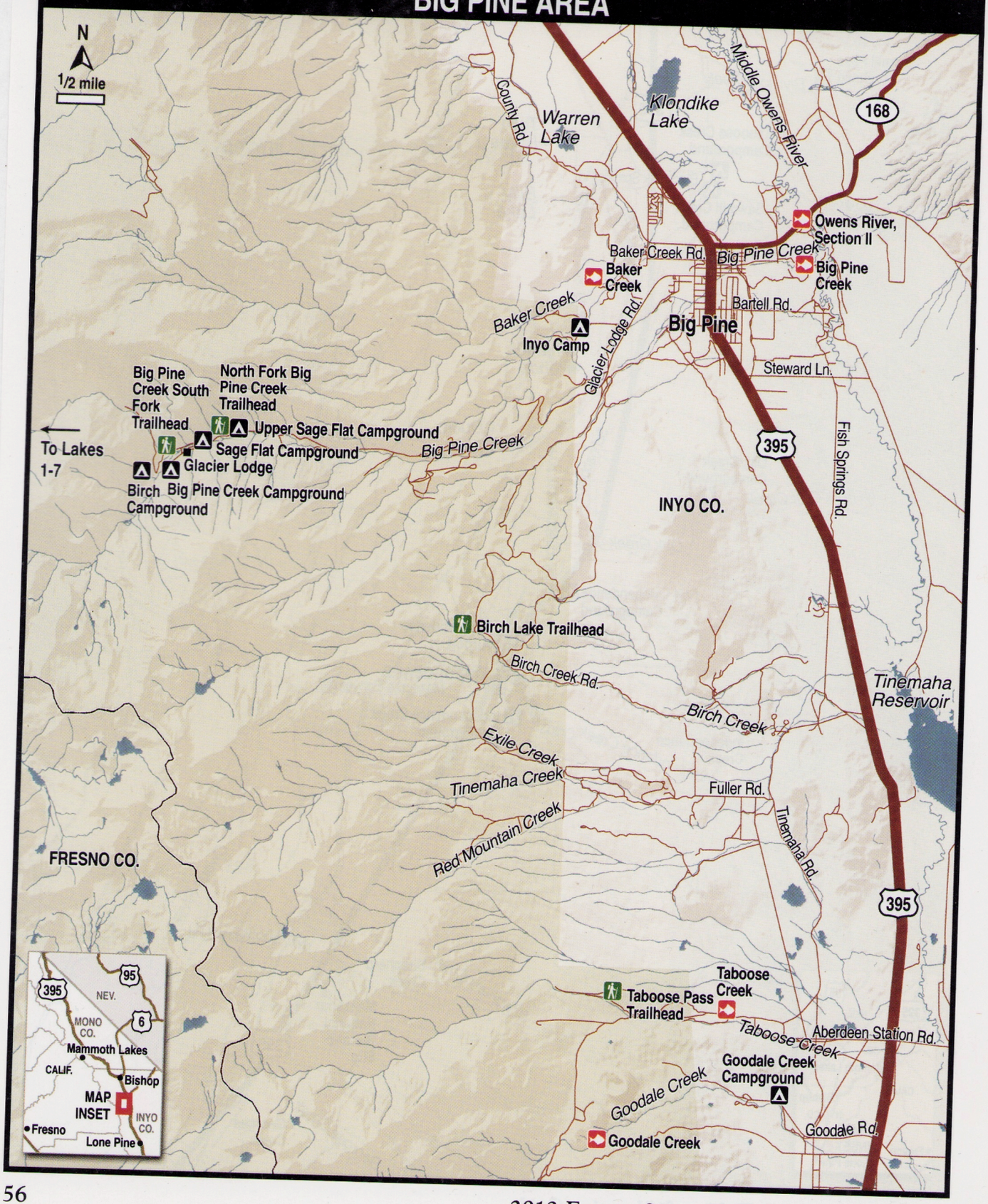
ADJACENT QUADRANGLE LOCATIONS

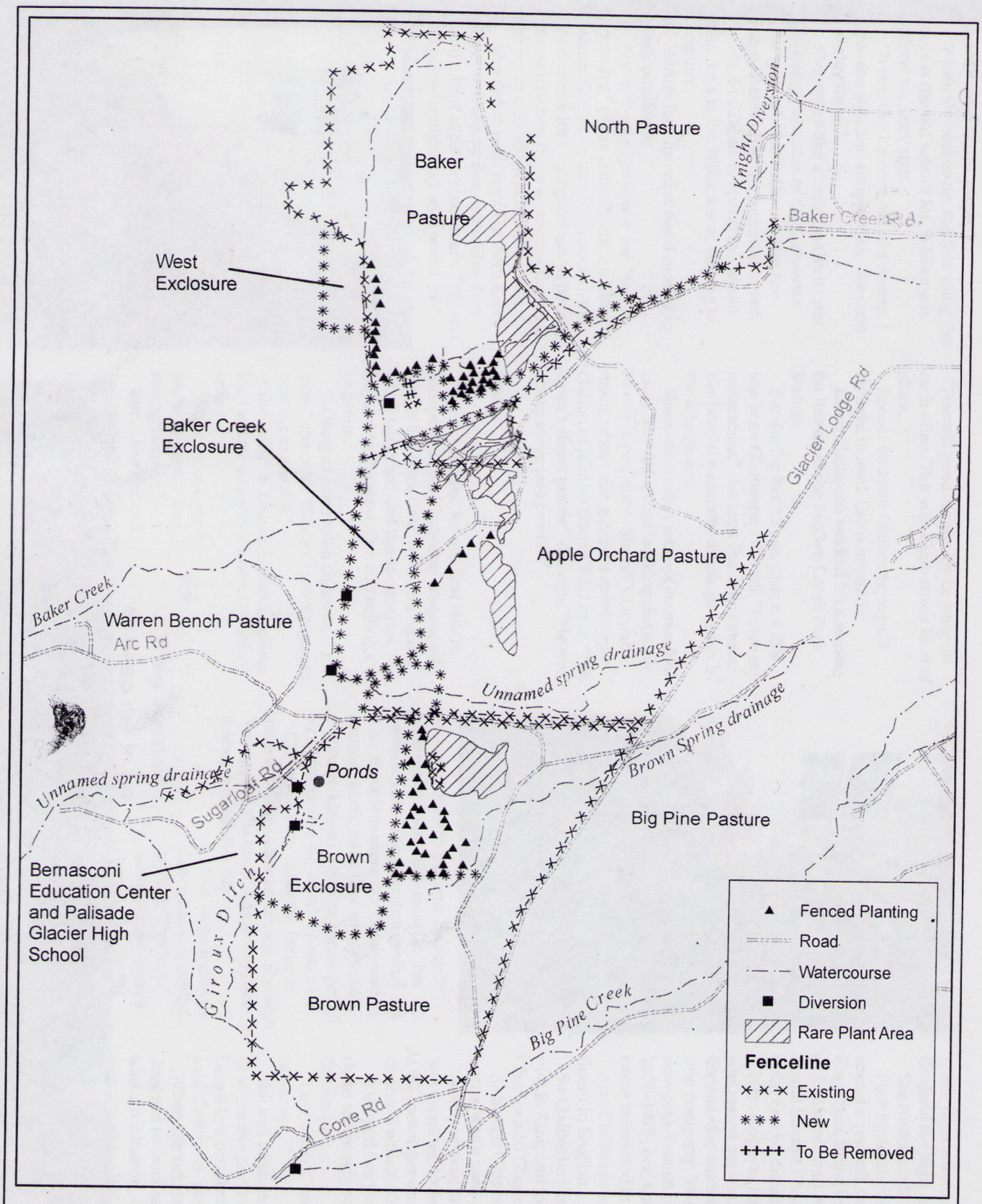
TOWNSHIP AND SECTION LINE CLASSIFICATION
Surveyed, Location Reliable — Surveyed, Location Unreliable — Unsurveyed, BLM Protraction

PRIMARY BASE SERIES MAP
INTERIM EDITION

BIG PINE NE, CALIFORNIA
(393-1C)
1978

BIG PINE AREA





Miles
0 0.1 0.2

N

Figure 2.4-1
Proposed Enhancement Elements of Baker Creek Site

Data Source: ESI 2005a

January 2006

BBQ FOR TWO

Big Pine adds a second BBQ joint

By Lunch

The chihuahua approves.

The chihuahua is named Chango, and he's the new jefe (at least he thinks he's the new jefe) at Hugo's BBQ in Big Pine.

As owner Roger Sandoval says, "He used to be skinnier, until we opened a few months ago. Now he's a bit of a sausage."

Hugo's BBQ is located where the Copper Top BBQ used to be - the Copper Top has moved north along Highway 395 past the Mobil station to its new spot.

So is there business enough for two BBQ joints? Sandoval says yes.

Primarily because Hugo's is BBQ-plus. "We're the only Mexican food place in Big Pine," he says, "That's 75% of our sales, although we do quite a bit of BBQ."

His most popular BBQ item: Birria, which he slow-cooks in an underground pit he excavated next to the smoker in the front yard.

"We put forty pounds of beef down there," he explained, "and we slow-cook it overnight. 12-16 hours ... we've been selling a lot of that."

The other thing that sets Hugo's apart are the hours. It opens at 6 a.m. selling breakfast burritos and closes 8 p.m. Every day.

The restaurant is a bit of a family affair. Roger's wife of forty years runs the kitchen. When we visited Wednesday, son J.R. was working the front window.

And Hugo's is named after Roger's eldest son, who passed away three years ago at the age of 37.

Hugo and his wife (who now lives in Bishop with Roger's grandchild) had spoken of opening a restaurant one day. This is Roger's way of honoring his son.

But to be clear, this is not the first restaurant Roger has operated. He used to own the Mobil station, and the Mobil station had a kitchen. "A lot of my old clientele is coming back," he said.

He acknowledges that at the end, his relationship with the Copper Top became a little sour. He had leased the property to the Copper Top for ten years, but a deal to sell the property to the Copper Top fell through.

He did extend their lease seven months while the Copper Top was building its new restaurant.

But the Copper Top, he said, was unhappy when Roger said he planned to do BBQ as well. "They threatened to sue," he said. But Roger added that it's a free country. What grounds, exactly, did they have to sue him on?

Roger That

Which led to a whole separate discussion about Roger's personal history and political philosophy.

He grew up on the outskirts of Guadalajara. Went to work at the age of eight or nine selling pastries on the street. And then shining shoes. "I made more money shining boots on the weekend than my Dad would make all week [at the mine]," he recalls.

He was 10-years old before he spent a day in school. His total formal education: 1.5 years.

A pair of Jefes: Chango and Roger in front of Hugo's BBQ.

In 1980, he jumped the border with his new wife. Their first destination: An uncle's house in L.A. His uncle then told him he thought there would be ranch work up in the Hammil Valley. That was Roger's ticket to the Eastern Sierra.

He never left.

In 1983, he opened his own lawn service business. Just went door-to-door with his card. No job too small. "By the end of the summer I had eighty accounts," he said.

Which forced him to get a bank account. He literally taught himself to write checks - he had a cheat sheet he'd use to help him remember what numbers went where.

Later, he went to work for a man named Jim Nicholas who owned a string of gas stations up and down the Sierra. "He was a very good man who taught me how to build a gas station," says Roger. In fact, Nicholas sold Roger his first gas station in Trona back in 1995, a station Roger owns to this day.

He and his wife obtained their green cards during the Reagan presidency and became citizens in the year 2000.

As a self-made man, I asked Roger about the keys to his success:

1. Hard work. Nothing comes easy. Some people have an idea that they'll go into business and have a bunch of employees, but you've got to be in the game seven days a week, manage your business and never give up.
2. "I never wanted to work for a paycheck. I wanted to work so I could learn something and then go do it myself later."
3. His wife Margarita. "My wife and I think alike and we work together. We're good partners."
4. "The only man who doesn't find work is the one who doesn't want it."

Sandoval remains a big fan of the late President Reagan and says he only votes for Republicans.

The Sheet couldn't resist asking Roger about President Trump and his immigration policy and the wall.

"We need the immigration," says Roger. "But status should go to those deserving." While he admits President Trump wasn't very likable, Roger says, "He was looking out for the interests of our country, and his country is my country."

BIG PINE

The Small Town with a Big Backyard, Big Pine is the hub for exploring some of the grandest areas in the region, from the Sierra Nevada in the west to the White Mountains in the east.

In the center of town is Crocker Street which, heading west, leaves the valley floor and climbs into the Sierra. Passing quaint homes the along the way, the road ascends further and enters Big Pine Canyon, winding along Big Pine Creek to campgrounds, cabins, a supply store, and a pack outfit for horseback excursions into the backcountry. At road's end, lace up your hiking boots and head up trails that lead to unparalleled scenery and adventure, including one of Big Pine's several claims to fame: Palisade Glacier, the southernmost glacier in the Western Hemisphere.

The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, high in the White Mountains, is home to pines that are among the oldest living things on earth, dating back thousands of years. Big Pine has the only paved access to this area, via State Route 168 at the north end of town. A visitor's center has information, refreshments and interpretive hiking trails that reveal the Bristlecone in its native habitat. Campgrounds nestle in the White Mountains—quiet and secluded, yet a little wild.

The Cal Tech Radio Observatory—or, as the locals call it, the "Ears"—actually "listens" to deep space. These large white discs, seen east of U.S. 395 north of Big Pine, are not generally open to the public, but are accessible through an Open House each spring and through tours given on the first Monday of each month during winter at the Owens Valley Site and during summer months at the High Site, or 'CARMA' (unless that

Bristlecone Pine Trees in Schulman Grove - Inyo National Forest

Palisade Glacier as seen from Sierra View Vista Point - Inyo National Forest

Monday falls on a holiday).

Some of the Eastern Sierra's finest fishing is found in and around Big Pine. Throughout the bounteous Big Pine Creek are numerous fishing spots, starting just a couple of miles outside town and continuing all the way to the end of the road 17 miles away. Close to town is the well-stocked Baker Ponds: turn west on Baker Creek Road, go about a mile to the campgrounds and from there the ponds are easy to find. Owens River, about a mile east of Big Pine on S.R. 168, abounds with trout and warm water species like catfish, bass and others.

In the desert and foothills surrounding Big Pine is plenty of room for mountain biking, 4-wheel driving, bouldering, rockhounding, exploring volcanic fields, studying the waterfowl or watching the water skiers at Klondike Lake, and luxuriating in the pools at Keough's

Palisade Glacier

Big Pine-Gateway to Outdoor Recreation

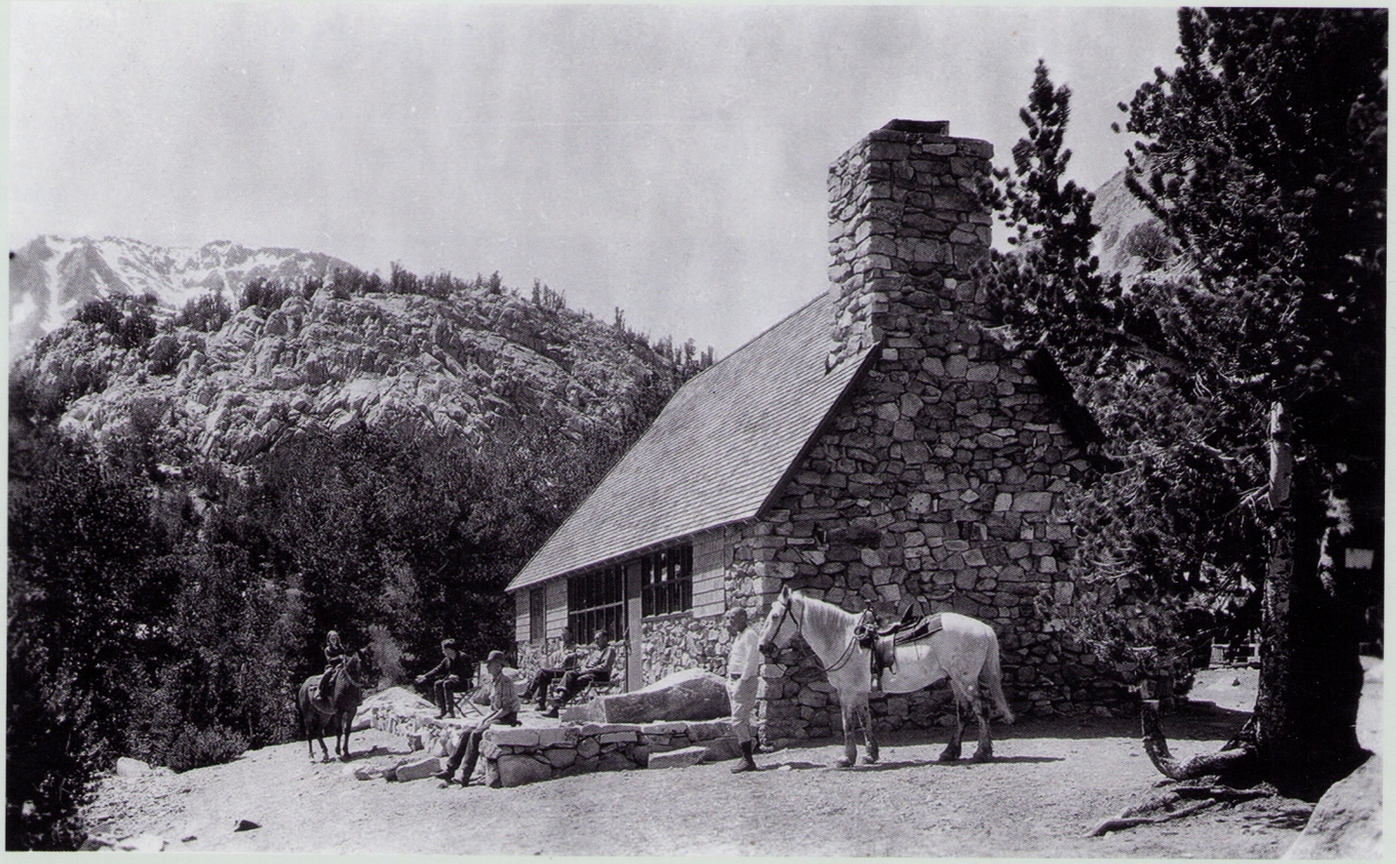
Small in size with a big outdoors, Big Pine is the gateway to Eastern Sierra adventure.

Big Pine and Baker Creeks are both immediately adjacent to the town of Big Pine. Fishing is good for rainbow, brown and brook trout. Just a few miles from town are Klondike Lake and Tinnemaha reservoir. Large and small mouth bass attract anglers at these two nice size lakes.

Several lakes are located above town in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and are accessed by good trails. Hikers who want to take in the scenery of Big Pine Canyon would be well served to allow time to wet a line in at least one of the area's beautiful lakes and creeks. And speaking of hiking, days can be spent exploring the incredible Big Pine backcountry.

Big Pine Canyon is home to several trails, campgrounds and historic Glacier Lodge located at the end of this 11-mile road. One can rough it in style, staying in one of its comfortable cabins and enjoying a tasty meal in its small restaurant.

Access to the White Mountains and its famous Bristlecone Pines is from Highway 168, about 24 miles east of Big Pine.



There is a good paved road to the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest at Schulman Grove. Visitors can enjoy hiking trails and picnic grounds, as well as a small interpretive center and bookstore.

Big Pine is also big on guest services. The town has a few different dining options, motels, retail stores and fuel.

The Roosevelt Tree of Big Pine

Travelers passing through Big Pine on El Camino Sierra can't help but notice the magnificent conifer tree at the intersection of Highways 395 and 168. Because of the tree's prominence in the town, it is often thought that it must be the eponym of Big Pine, but not so. The tree is not a pine at all, but a Giant Sequoia.

The Giant Sequoia sits like a lonely sentinel on the town's northeast side. The enormous tree looms above all others and can be easily seen as one motors into Big Pine. The tree is known as the Roosevelt Tree. It is reported that the Roosevelt Tree was planted in July of 1913, to commemorate the opening of Westgard Pass (Hwy 168) to automobile traffic. Though no longer in office at the time of the planting, the tree was named in honor of President Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt and was part of yet another publicity effort of Inyo Good Road Club.

The Giant Sequoia, or Sequoiadendron giganteum as it is called in the scientific world, is not native to the Eastern Sierra, though several specimens of this monarch exist along El Camino Sierra outside of Big Pine. Mature Giant Sequoias inhabit the towns of Lone Pine, Independence and Bishop. The two tallest trees in Independence (at the County Courthouse and at the former Los Angeles Department of Water & Power's headquarters) are both of this noble species.

The Club, and boosters from Big Pine, were hopeful the federal government would choose the route over Westgard Pass for a new coast to coast route to be known as the Lincoln Highway. Government officials chose a route further north through Reno, but Westgard Pass was chosen for a secondary transcontinental highway known as the Midland Trail. Stop and enjoy the magnificent redwood your next time in Big Pine, and reflect upon its place in history… along El Camino Sierra.

Big Pine, California

Photos By G. Louis Vopalensky

Traveling north of Lone Pine you will pass through the town of Independence on your way to the small and charming community of Big Pine, Population 1,350.

Approximately 35 miles north of downtown Lone Pine you will come upon the wildlife turnout just south of Big Pine where you can observe several large herds of Tule Elk that forage in the alfalfa fields in the Spring and Fall when the weather is cooler. (This is quite a sight!)

Continue one mile further and you will see the turnoff to Fish Springs State Hatchery where some of the Eastern Sierra's prize trout are raised. Another 3 miles and you enter the town of Big Pine where you can stop for gas, groceries, hardware, visitor information at the Big Pine Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center or even a meal before continuing on with the days' activities. The Visitor Center is located on the east side of Main Street between Uncle Bud's and Mountain View Video & Gifts. The center is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. You can reach the Big Pine Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center at (760) 938-2114 or (866) 938-2114.

A turn west up Crocker Street (Glacier Lodge Rd.) will take you up to Big Pine Canyon. Continue 11 miles to the end of the road at the Big Pine Trailhead parking lot and the Glacier Lodge Resort area. The drive is beautiful and parallels the Big Pine Creek where you can pull over and drop a line in the creek or have a picnic. There are numerous Forest Service campgrounds, with beautiful views in the canyon. Take a short or a long hike from the trailhead and experience the serenity of the backcountry. If you're really up to the task, a challenging 10 mile hike (one way) will take you past the Big Pine Lakes on your way to Paradise Glacier (the southernmost glacier in the Western Hemisphere)

Back in town head north on Hwy. 395 to the end of town where State Hwy. 168 intersects and you will find our information Kiosk dedicated to the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest and Big Pine Canyon Recreation Area. Continue up Hwy. 168 through Westgard Pass for approximately 12 miles to the Bristlecone Pine Forest turnoff. Drive 13 miles to the Forest Service Visitor Center at Schulman Grove where you can gather information before hiking through the first grove of ancient trees. From Schulman Grove travel 11 miles to the patriarch Grove where Methusula lives, the oldest known living tree, now more than 4,800 years old!

If you prefer to travel the North Death Valley Road from Big Pine the turnoff is also on Hwy. 168. This is a beautiful and peaceful drive that will lead you to Eureka Sand Dunes, Ubehebe Crater and eventually Scotty's Castle (68 miles from Big Pine). Once inside the park you can stop at numerous locals and exit the south entrance of Hwy. 136, that will bring you right back to Lone Pine.

Easy Day Trips - From Big Pine

Marble Canyon - 22 Miles - Death Valley Road to Saline Valley Road, turn right. This mining area is dotted with old mines and remnants of miner's shacks.

Saline Valley - 60 Miles - Many hot pools and historic remnants and mines.

Joshua Tree Forest - 22 Miles - An unusually large stand of Joshua trees. Especially spectacular in the May-June blooming season.

Death Valley National Park - North Entrance - 34 Miles - Enter the Park on the scenic and historic Death Valley Road. Most of the roadway inside the Oark boundary is unpaved as of this time.

Eureka Snd Dunes - 50 Miles - The highest dunes in the country. Camping and picnic grounds.

Sulphur Pits - 45 Miles - This old sulphur mine features yellow and green sulphur chunks pure enough to burn and melt into red liquid when ignited.

A welcome sign in Big Pine

After a lot of labor, generous contributions and quality workmanship, the community of Big Pine has a completely refurbished sign welcoming northbound motorists to town. "A lot of work went into this project and several people deserve recognition for their efforts," the Big Pine Civic Club said in a press release, thanking Doug Clair for the use of his sandblaster. Alpine Paint "for a great deal on the paint for the sign" and Katie Bird "for her beautiful art work." The club offered a special thank you to Kent Schlick for taking charge of the project and basically completing the sandblasting, preparation and base painting of the sign. "The project has taken two years to complete and Big Pine is very grateful for a job well done," the club said. Photo submitted 4-23-2013

EASY DAY TRIPS FROM BIG PINE

SALINE VALLEY - 60 MILES - MANY HOT POLS AND HISTORIC REMNANTS AND MINES.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK - ENTER THE PARKON THE SCENIC AND HISTORIC DEATH VALLEY ROAD. MOST OF THE ROADWAY INSIDE THEPARK BOUNDARY IS UNPAVED AS OF THIS TIME.

EUREKA SAND DUNES- 50 MILES - THE HIGHEST DUNES IN THE COUNTRY. CAMPING AND PICNIC GROUNDS.

SCOTTY'S CASTLE- 75 MILES - POPUULAR HISTORIC TOURIST STOP IN THE NORTH END OF DEATH VALLEY.

DRIVING SOUTH - WILDLIFE VIEWPOINT - 9 MILES - VIEW THE TULE ELK HERD AT TINNEMANA RESERVOIR.

COTTONWOOD CHARCOAL KILNS - 57 MILES - RUINS OF LIKNS USED TO MAKE CHARCOAL USED IN SMELTING RAW ORE TAKEN FROM NEARBY MINES.

DRIVING TO THE NORTH

LAWS RAILROAD MUSEUM - 2- MILES - TRIBUT TO THE "SLIM PRINCESS" AND THE GOOD OLD DAYS IN THE OWENS VALLEY. TRAINS AND AUTHENTIC OLD BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT ON EXHIBIT. VIA HWY. 6 - EXTENSIVE AND SPECTACULAR DISPLAYS OF ANCIENT INDIAN ROCK ART ALONG FISH SLOUGH ROAD AND CHIDAGO CANYON ROAD.

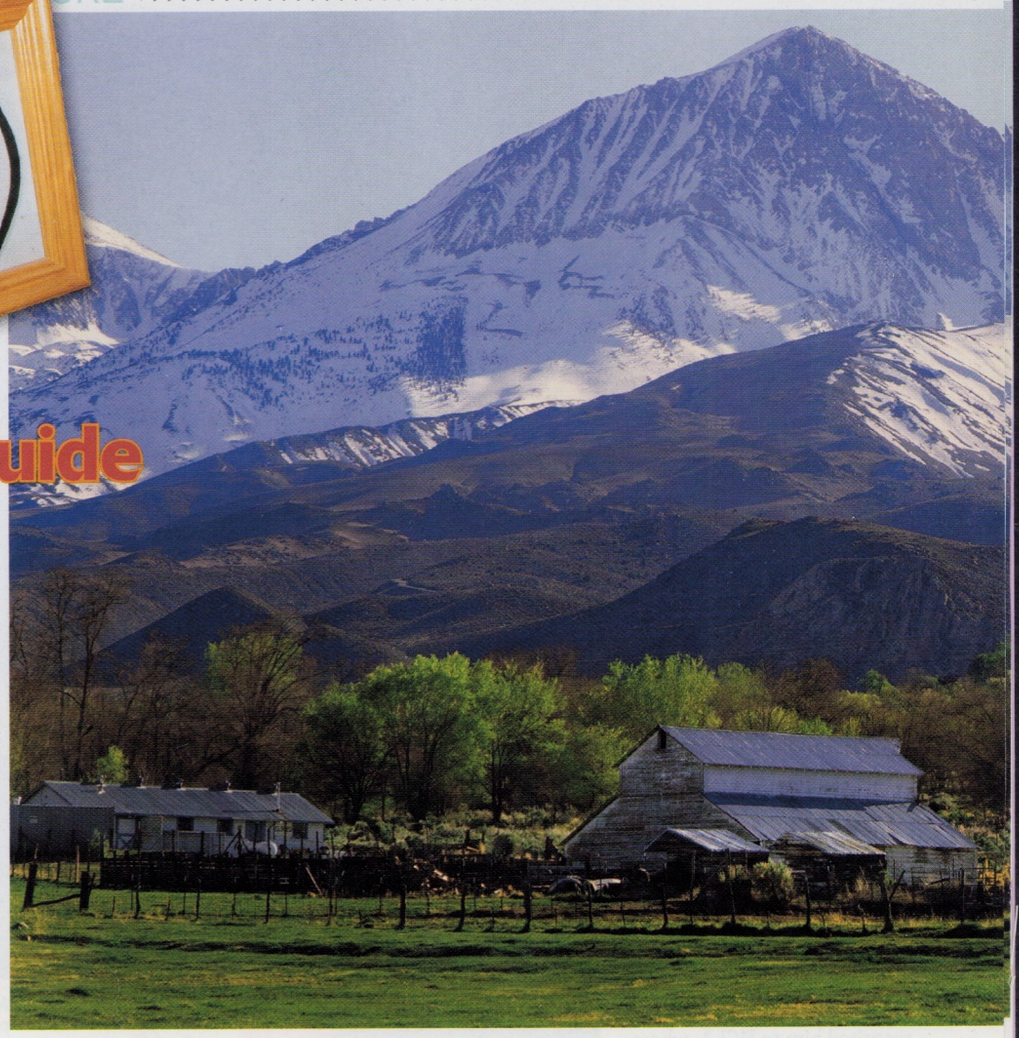
PAIUTE PALACE CASINO & RESTAURANT - 16 MILES UP HWY. 395. FRIENDLY PEOPLE AND FRIENDLY MACHINES, WITH A FABULOUS RESTAURANT SERVING DAILY BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER.

BODIE GHOST TOWN - 115 MILES - THIS AUTHENIC AND IMPRESSIVE GHOST TOWN IS THE FINEST IN THE WEST WITH OVER 100 STANDING BUILDINGS AND NO COMMERCIAL AMENITIES. IT IS WELL WORTH THE DRIVE. BE SURE TO TAKE A CAMERA!

DRIVING TO THE EAST

SIERRA VIEWPOINT - 23 MILES - MOST SPECTACULAR VIEWS OF THE SIERRA FROM 9,000 FT. ELEVATION. MAPS AND VIEWING SCOPES ASSIST IN IDENTIFYING PEAKS ON THE SIERRA CREST.

DEEP SPRINGS COLLEGE - 26 MILES - AN INVITATIONAL WORKING RANCH COLLEGE ATTENDED PAST AND PRESENT BY AN ELITE FEW SEEKING CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE.



Downtown Guide

Little Ol' Big Pine

FOR MOST PEOPLE BOPPING up and down Highway 395, Big Pine isn't much more than a speed bump.

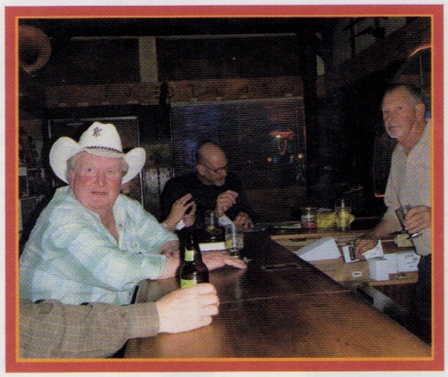
A measly baker's-dozen miles south of Bishop, Big Pine's not often seen as anything more than a place to gas up and slow down for a few minutes before speeding on toward better-known Eastside locales like Mammoth, Death Valley and Yosemite. Heck, half the people who visit (or even live in) the Eastside don't know the difference between Independence and Big Pine—although that might have something to do with the effects of alcohol at higher elevations.

But it's their loss. Like most of the towns on the Eastside, Big Pine is a great place to grab a beer, a bite and a thick slice of Old West history. Little ol' Big Pine has a lot more to offer than meets the speedily passing eye.

ROSSI-VELT

The first thing you need to know about Big Pine is that its name, just like its sleepy appearance, is a bit deceiving. The big evergreen tree that marks the northern boundary of the town and the gateway to the wonders of Highway 168 (Westgard Pass) isn't actually a pine tree and it's not why the town got its name.

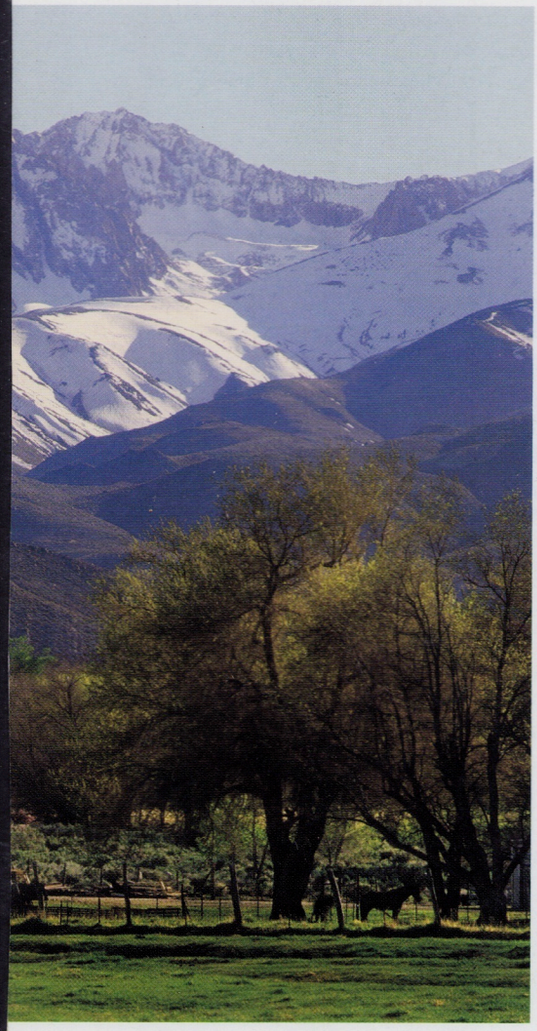
There once was a time when **Big Pine Creek**, which tumbles its way east from High Sierra glacial melt toward the meandering Owens River, was lined with an impressive row of yellow pines. But as the region began to bustle with the needs of miners and mountain lovers, the trees all were cut down until a lone large one remained. The big pine lived just long enough to give the new town its name before it, too, was sacrificed.



Big Pine's most prominent living tree is actually a nearly 90-foot-high giant sequoia known as the **Teddy Roosevelt Tree**, planted in 1913 to commemorate the opening of Westgard Pass to automobile traffic. Though a transplant, the Roosevelt Tree is now a source of local pride, just like the deep roots of local ranching families such as the Rossis.

The first Rossis arrived in Bigpine, as it was spelled then, from northern Italy back in 1884. Angelo Rossi, better known simply as Grandpa, walked much of the way across the country with half of his family (and their family's secret spaghetti sauce recipe) in tow before finally arriving in the Owens Valley.

"Our family has been around here for a long time," explains Duane Rossi, 74, part of the family's third American generation. "We don't know what tough is nowadays. There was nothing to eat around here back then except game. They used to even eat blackbirds. They knew what to do to survive."



[Clockwise from above] **Owens Valley Bull Snake.**

Hardly a devil dog, Razz opens the fridge to serve up a cold one.

Rossi's Steak and Spaghetti restaurant features live, local music every weekend night.

Proprietors and longtimers Duane and Mike Rossi preside.

ALL PHOTOS: MCKENNA & DAVIS

The first thing you need to know about Big Pine is that its name, just like its sleepy appearance, is a bit deceiving.

Eventually this scarcity of food, coupled with the recent repeal of Prohibition, inspired the family to open **Rossi's Steak and Spaghetti Restaurant** in 1939. Since then, Rossi's has become legendary for homemade spaghetti and barbecue sauces, blue cheese dressing, shrimp scampi, filet mignon and the spumoni they serve as dessert with every entrée.

"This is a real family restaurant," says Duane, who runs Rossi's. Reservations are recommended, especially on Saturday nights, when live piano music is usually played in the restaurant.

Alongside **Rossi's Restaurant**, with a separate entrance on Main Street, you can find the small, L-shaped **Rossi's Bar**. For close to two decades now, Rossi's has been serving booze, beer and vino to patrons who warm themselves by the woodburning stove in the winter and regale one another with fishing tales in the summer.

"A lot of beer has gone across this bar over the years," says Mike Rossi, the owner of the place and Duane's 77-year-old cousin.

The bar sits barely more than a half-dozen souls and is adorned with local cattle brands, a complete Mule Days belt-buckle collection and lots of other neat old stuff they don't like you to call "antiques."

"These here aren't antiques; they're all just family stuff, heirlooms," Duane explains.

"When you get to be as old as us," Mike adds, "*We're* the antiques."

Rossi's Bar is open most nights until everybody goes home, and if you're lucky you might even catch a glimpse of Wang Fu, a Chinese man who came to Big Pine to escape ethnic strife in Virginia City and wound up living and working in the basement of Rossi's, where his ghost is said to still roam.

ITCHIN' FOR A HITCHIN'

Next door to Rossi's, on the east side of Highway 395, is a bar known for its tail-wagging service and abundance of helpful advice written all over the bar—stuff like, "Drink 'til she's cute...but stop before the wedding."

E and J's Hitchin' Rail has been serving up beer and...well, mostly beer for about as long as any of the regulars can remember (circa the Nixon presidency). Under the motto of "Cold beer, now cheaper than gas," E and J's—as some folks refer to the place—is open daily from 10 in the morning 'til close. For those who don't care for the Hitchin' Rail's—as others call the place—two names or non-specific hours, they offer up sayings like, "We don't care how you do it in Los Angeles."

"You've got to slow down and make sure you enjoy life, and this bar is a good place to do that," explains Candice Whitlock, a born-and-bred Big Piner, grandmother and barkeep at the Hitchin' Rail.

The first thing you notice upon entering E and J's, besides the peanut shell–strewn floor, is a massive snakeskin on the far wall under the inscription, "Owens Valley Bull Snake." Of course, the almost 18-foot-long skin isn't from a local species but rather belonged to an Amazonian anaconda. "We sure have fun messing with the tourists about that snake being caught here in the Owens Valley," Candice chuckles.

While Candice is definitely a good bartender, it's her barking, beer-serving partner who gets most of the attention. Razz is a female black Lab who not only makes a great bird dog, but also tends a mean bar, so long as you like to drink Coors.

When you order a beer from Razz, she'll walk over to the fridge behind the bar, grab the rope attached to the door, pull it open, pick out a cold can of suds, walk it over to you and drop it in your hand. And she doesn't even expect a tip, outside of a "good girl" and a pat on the head.

"She only serves Coors, though," explains Terry Whitlock, Razz's owner as well as Candice's husband and fellow bartender at the Hitchin' Rail. "One time she accidentally

continued on page 30

Destination	Miles from Big Pine
CAL TRANS ROAD INFO. 800-427-ROAD(7623)	
Bishop	15
Bakersfield ~~(via Tioga Pass)~~	215
Barstow	156
Boise, ID	600
Beatty, Nevada	132
Bridgeport	95
Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest (Schulman Grove)	26
Carson City, Nevada (via Hwy.395)	190
Carson City, Nevada (via Hwy.6)	261
Eureka Sand Dunes	50
Fallon, Nevada	200
Fresno (via Bakersfield)	322
Furnace Creek in Death Valley (via Lone Pine)	130
Gardnerville, Nevada	177
Goldfield, Nevada	95
Hawthorne, Nevada	130
Hwy. 95 in Nevada (via Hwy.168 east from Big Pine)	80
Independence	26
Johannesburg	93
June Lake	70
Kramer Junction	165
Las Vegas, Nevada (via Barstow/Tonapah)	378
Las Vegas, Nevada (via Hwy. 168 to hwy. 95)	245
Lee Vining	75
Lone Pine	45
Los Angeles	240
Mammoth Lakes	60
Mojave	155
Greater Orange County	300
Pearsonville	98
Reno, Nevada (via US Hwy 395)	220
Reno, Nevada (via Hwy. 6)	262
Ridgecrest	125
Sacramento	325
San Bernardino	235
San Diego	350
San Francisco (via Hwy. 120)	320
Scotty's Castle, D.V. (via Death Valley Road)	85
Sequoia National Park (via Bakersfield)	326
Sequoia National Park (via Hwy. 120)	242
Lake Tahoe	190
Tonopah, Nevada	130
Victorville	200
Winnemuca, Nevada	335
Yosemite National Park (US395 to Hwy. 120)	140

The Big Pine Visitors Guide

"Indian Cowboy," continued from page 25

he laughs. No matter how he approached it, however, the rodeo world certainly took Garrett Spoonhunter seriously—especially when he earned the prestigious title of World Champion Indian Cowboy in 1979.

"Rodeo is a big part of my life," says Spoonhunter. "I've made some good friends and went through two or three generations of good horses. And then there's all those hairy-legged women," he grins.

"I've done a lot of shit, but winning World Champion was a highlight. I had the best horse in the country," Spoonhunter says of Jubilee, his favorite horse of all time and a legendary mount in rodeo circles. "He was a good pony. Everybody wanted to ride that potlicker."

All told, Spoonhunter won 280 rodeo buckles and 35 saddles. "But," as he explained to a crowd at Rusty's one recent Saturday, "I gave everything away." The group around Spoonhunter grew to include his daughter Tania, one of three he fathered with the love of his life, Anita Sepsey Spoonhunter. "I've got about seven saddles left," he said, nodding toward his daughter. "They'll be yours." Tania, who shares her father's wry humor, cracked a half-smile and replied, "I'm gonna have to buy seven horses, then." ■

Entertainment/Culture: "Little Ol' Big Pine," continued from page 29

picked up a Budweiser and I had to wash her mouth out."

E and J's has pool tournaments on Monday nights and reminds patrons that "everyone here brings happiness. Some when they enter. Some when they leave."

BIG BACKYARD

The community of Big Pine (4,000 feet in elevation and home to 1,350) has its own motto: "The small town with a big backyard." And its backyard is certainly something Big Pine should be proud of.

Less than a dozen steep miles to the west of town lies the site of historic **Glacier Lodge**. The original lodge burned down in 1999, but the resort still rents cabins and the store is a great trailside stop with simple food: breakfast, burgers, beer and such. The real reason to head up the canyon is the hiking (and fishing and climbing). It's a strenuous five miles and 2,300 feet to the lowest of the Big Pine lakes (and nine miles and 4,000 feet to the base of the glacier), but worth the sweat to catch a glimpse of the dramatic 14,000-foot peaks surrounding the **Palisade Glacier**, one of the southernmost glaciers in the U.S. and the largest in the Sierra.

Perched atop the White Mountains, 24 miles northeast of Big Pine, you can find the magical **Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest**. Walk among these gnarled elders to take in huge Sierra views and speculate which bristlecone is Methuselah, the oldest tree in the world at approximately 4,700 years.

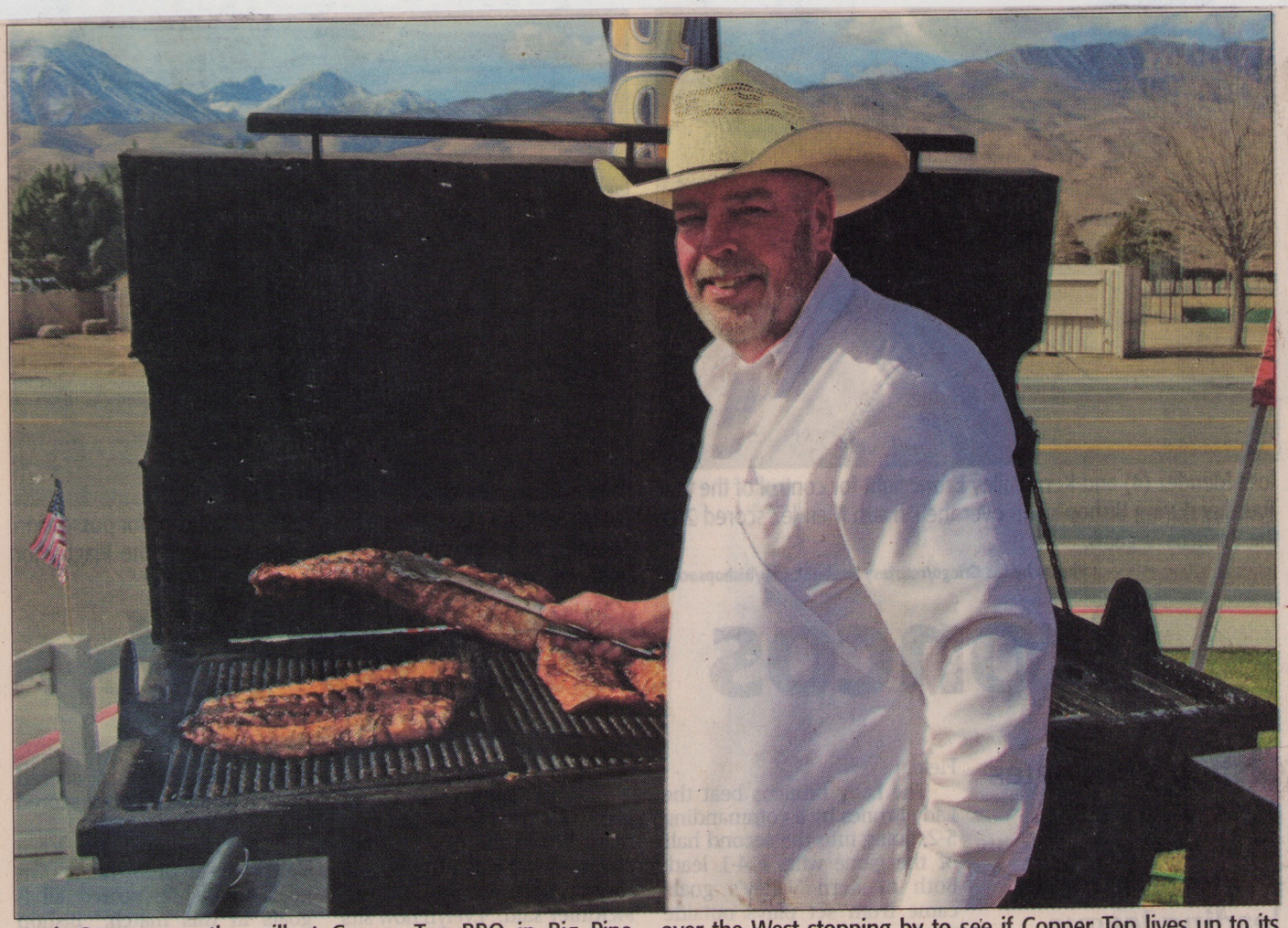
As for other stuff to do back in Big Pine's front yard, **Jeff's Country Kitchen** offers tasty omelets, homemade chili and pies. Each booth in the old-fashioned diner has a collection of comedy books to keep you chuckling while you eat. **Big Pine Chevron's Mexican Gourmet** has developed an Eastside following for their fresh burritos, tamales and chiles rellenos. Since 1974, **Carroll's Market** has been the stop for all your grocery needs, and the **Hi Country Market** is a must-stop for their "Beer Cave," which keeps the brewskis perfectly chilled at 36 degrees. And then there's always the one-stop trifecta of **Big Pine Sporting Goods/ Mountain View Video/Café Italiano**. From fishing tackle and tips to the latest flicks filmed in Lone Pine to shots of espresso, owner Brett Birmingham either has it or can tell you where to find it.

"It might not seem like much when you're driving by, but there is so much to explore around here, it'll blow your mind," Brett boasts about his surprisingly bountiful hometown. ■

–M.M.

The best in the U.S.

BIG PINE'S COPPER TOP BBQ IS WHERE FOOD MAKES FRIENDS



Hank Otten mans the grill at Copper Top BBQ in Big Pine Wednesday. Since news broke that Yelp had named the locally owned and operated business as the best restaurant in the U.S., Otten said business has been booming with patrons from all over the West stopping by to see if Copper Top lives up to its reputation. The consensus on Wednesday was a resounding "yes."

Photos by Mike Gervais

Rossi's Place on Main Street in Big Pine

THE SHEET | Saturday, August 16, 2014

ROSSI'S RESETS IN BIG PINE

By James

If you live in Big Pine, the Rossi Family is well-known to you. The Rossis are one of Big Pine's pioneer families with a history that goes well back to the town's earliest days.

If you are a traveler on the 395 corridor, there is a good chance you have stopped for drinks at Rossi's Place, which is owned by Mike Rossi, or perhaps had dinner at the now-closed Rossi's Steak & Spaghetti Restaurant.

According to Mike Rossi's mother, Alma, the family bought the building in 1939, which today is the site of Carroll's Market. Back then it housed a restaurant and a bar. Mike took over the bar in 1954 when he left military service. The bar remained at the original location until 1994 when Mike's cousin, Duane Rossi, asked Mike if he would be interested in moving the bar to just up the street to compliment Duane's new restaurant, Rossi's Steak and Spaghetti.

The bar had a great run at that location for twenty years and then, in a positive variation on "what goes around, comes around," the bar relocated to its original location at 142 South Main Street this summer.

The "newly-relocated" Rossi's Place still retains the same warm and friendly atmosphere for which it has always been known. It features a full bar and food made from homemade recipes.

The ladies seem to especially enjoy the Vodka Collins. As for the food, everything is "Fresh– Not Frozen." All the pizza crusts are made from scratch. There are the "Build your own Pizzas," sandwiches, and salads with Rossi's "Original" Famous Bleu Cheese Dressing available along with great Beer-battered Onion Rings! Diners recommend trying the BBQ Chicken and Chicken Alfredo Specialty Pizzas.

With Mike Rossi behind the bar, often with his wife Yvette, it is as it has always been– very much a family business. Alyx Bien is the chef who whips up the magic in the kitchen, while granddaughter-in-law Kendra Kelly works as a waitress and back-up bartender. Granddaughter Breanne Nelums steps in as a back-up waitress, and all manner of Rossi's relatives and friends stop in. And there are a lot of them!

Rossi's Place opens at 5 p.m, It is closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. There is food service from 5-9 p.m. and Rossi's is open for Monday Night Football! It is closed on the major holidays. Take out is available by calling 760.938.2308.

Big Pine bar and eatery returns to its roots

9-14-2014

Rossi's Place moves into original building owned by family matriarch

By Charles James
Register Correspondent

The Rossis are one of Big Pine's most prominent pioneer families with a history that goes well back to 1887. One of the town's best known watering holes, Rossi's Place, owned by Mike Rossi, recently relocated to its original location in a building that dates back to the 1930s.

Rossi's mother, Alma, bought the building in 1939; today most locals are familiar with it as the big red building in the center of town, Carroll's Market. Originally the building had a restaurant and a bar. Mike took over the bar in 1954 when he left military service. In 1994, Rossi's cousin, Duane, asked him to move his bar into the building where Duane's new restaurant, Rossi's Steak and Spaghetti, was opening, and where it remained for the next 20 years.

With the recent closure of the restaurant, Rossi's Place has returned to its original location at 132 N. Main St. It features the same full bar and offers food.

Gathered together on a recent night at Rossi's Place in Big Pine – the resurrected bar that used to be attached to Rossi's Steak and Spaghetti down the street – were (l-r) owners Mike and Yvette Rossi with Debbie Kruse, Erin Whitlocke and granddaughter Kendra Kelly.

Photo by Charles James

Big Pine 2016

CITIZEN OF THE DECADE

BOB STEELE

The Big Pine Civic Club honored Bob Steele with the "Citizen of the Decade" award at the Heritage Dinner held on October 15, 2016. Bob has been a driving force in Big Pine for a few decades. He sets up his sound systems for all community events, including all the Veterans events held at the TREE, the Big Pine Christmas Tree Lighting, local funerals to name a few. In the earlier years his involvement with the Civic Club included organizing the Big Pine "Haunted House" and Shaved ice Booth.

Also in the early years Bob got a group of musician together and held the infamous "Grapevine" event in Big Pine for many years.

He has and continues to "Spear Head" the implimentation of the "BP Ditch System". This of course means dealing with DWP for 40 years, getting volunteers organized for the digging, laying of pipe, mixing cement and spring clean up. Our "Go to guy". Bob told me recently while he was talking to the new DWP contact person that the new guy said "Oh you're Bob Steele, we actually have a program about dealing with Bob Steele in Big Pine" don't you just love it?

Thank you Bob for all your work.

SIERRA MAJESTY 2010

Eitan Bino and Dorit Pomerantz of Tarzana were on a November backpacking trip to the Palisades glacier, high in the Sierra, when they came across this view. "We slept in Big Pine," Bino says, who took the shot. "The morning revealed fall scenery that rivals or exceeds the East Coast. We hiked only to the bottom of the glacier, but the trail meandered between amazing glacial lakes and impressive snowcapped mountains." The camera: a Sony a 530.

Arch above Big Pine

Deep Springs College is a prestigous alternative college located in Deep Springs Valley, between the White and the Inyo mountains. Deep Springs was founded in 1917 by industrialist L. L. Nunn.He chose the location for its isolation and potential for teaching students self-sufficiency and an idea of ruggedness promted through hands-on ranch and farm work. I addition to coursework, students work a minimum of 20 hours a week either on the ranch and farm attached to the college or in positions related to the college and community. Position titles have historically included cook, irrigator, butcher, groundskeeper, cowboy, "office cowboy," dairy, and feedman. Deep Springs maintains a cattle herd and an alfalfa hay farming operation. The maximum 26 students per year have always been male, and although there is a push to include female students in recent years, it remains all male at this time.

eastern sierra news service
INYO COUNTY NEWS-LETTER
INDEPENDENCE, CALIFORNIA
July 31, 1978
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"May the news in your day be good news every day"

***

BUT IF ROCK IS ON THE WAY OUT, nobody could know it to judge by the Big Pine "Grapevine Festival." The annual festival has become big business, along with similar shows promoted by a pair of Big Pine entrepreneurs, Bob and Stan Steele. Bob Steele tells us more than 3000 people camped, danced, applauded and cheered the six bands he signed for the local bash. They also went through 50 kegs of beer "just as a starter," and brought in unopposed "all the pot they wanted." Each party-goer laid out $5 for the privilege to listen to country and rock sounds that - in our view - were forgettable. But, as they say, a good time was had by all. The Steeles keep the festival orderly, kind of, ...with 30 bouncers who, this year, had to deal with only one serious incident. Seems a drunk pulled a knife, but he was subdued by the crowd and then, according to a Steele cohort, "It all worked out okay with no problem; the guy he was going to stab kicked him in the head and we didn't have any trouble."

***

CLASSY SHOW. RIGHT? The Steeles say next year it may be even bigger. They're dickering with DWP for a bigger chunk of land to stage their beer bust; at present they have about seven acres.

***

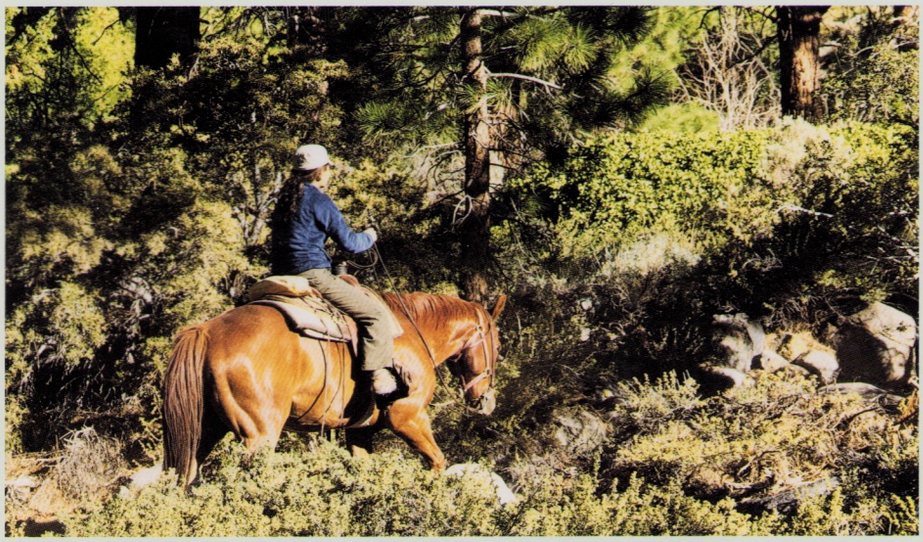
A FEATURE OF THE GRAPEVINE GIG WAS A "WET T-shirt contest" for the gals. It was won by someone from Palm Springs, although we didn't know people from Palm Springs went to things like the Grapevine Festival. "Wet T-Shirt Contests," which appeal primarily to the beer and pot crowd, go over real big, we're sure, with the feminists. Maybe that's the *real* reason they're marching on Washington these days. One festival-goer, a male, delightedly reports on how the contestants "took off the T-shirts" after the contest. Such is the state of the musical arts in Inyo County. Great stuff.

***

A Near View of the Palisades Glacier

By David Woodruff

The Eastern Sierra are well known far beyond their geographical boundaries. People come from all over the world to experience the unique and awesome beauty that this special region has to offer. In the summer of 2012, a visitor from Japan embarked on an epic journey to one of the most incredible of all places in the Eastern Sierra.



Ayako Akagi is an avid outdoor enthusiast, she had already made previous visits to the United States. In the spring of 2012, Ayako decided upon a trip to California's Eastern Sierra. Ayako knew the area was one of great beauty, but she wanted to go somewhere unique and different. Somewhere that would challenge not only her senses, but her soul. She poured over photos and pictures of this magnificent area and spent many a late evening researching for just the perfect place to go.

Ayako came upon some photographs of jagged and brooding peaks. In the basins directly below the summit of these peaks, she noticed large expanses of what she thought were snow. From further research Ayako learned these impressive peaks were called the Palisades, and the areas of snow she saw in the photographs were actually glaciers. Glaciers... in the Sierra Nevada? Ayako had no idea these remnants of a long ago ice age still existed in these mountains. Palisade Glacier was actually the largest and one of the most southerly glaciers in the Sierra. These incredible mountains and their glacier can be seen on the front cover of this issue of the Inyo County Guide. Ayako thought this might be the perfect place for her Sierra Nevada journey.

Ayako contacted Glacier Pack Train, an outfitter based 11 miles west of Big Pine, California. The trail to the Palisades was long and steep and Ayako wanted to spend as much time as possible in the area of the glacier. Guide and owner Murtt Stewart would take Ayako and her supplies 6 miles and 4,000' up to a base camp below the glacier at 11,000', from which Ayako could explore.

Not having ridden a horse since

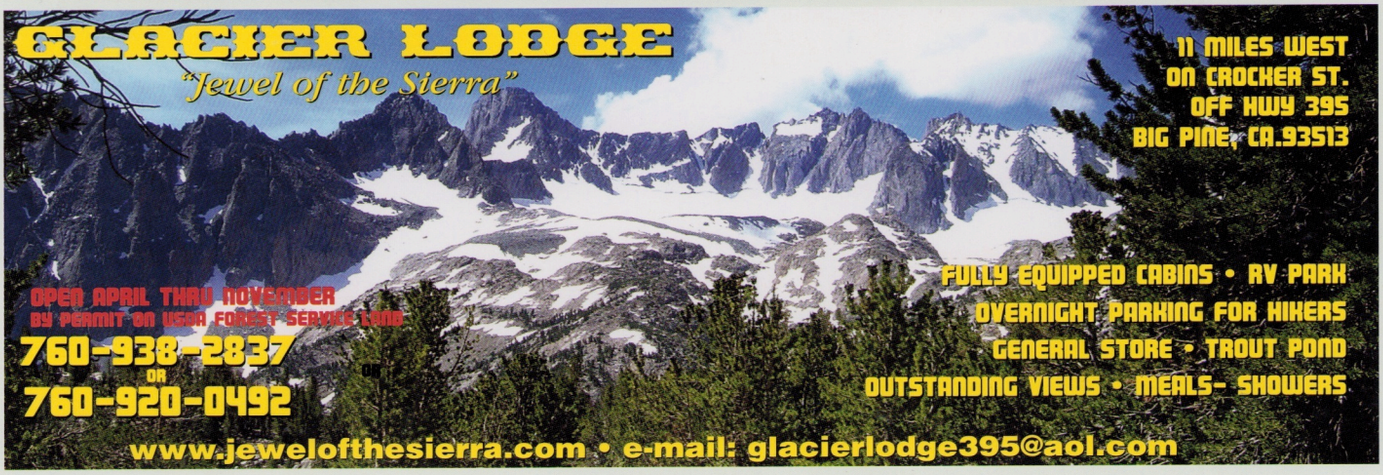
Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3
being a child, Ayako was a bit uncertain of her ability to control the large steed assigned to her. With a few instructions from Murtt's assistant Sala and 30 minutes of "on the job" riding, Ayako began to feel comfortable and relaxed enough in the saddle to begin enjoying the spectacular scenery.

Quickly, they passed an old stone cabin once owned by 1930s actor Lon Chaney. Soon after, First and Second Lakes appeared. Ayako admired their beauty and thought how their color looked like blue and white paints blended together. The trail climbed steeply towards the towering peaks. Ayako reflected on how great it was to have the assistance of the horse to get her and her supplies to such a beautiful place. She expressed much appreciation to her new four-legged friend.

Murtt took Ayako to Summit Lake, the highest lake in this nine lake basin. A perfect campsite was found and Murtt bid farewell to Ayako. He would return to pick her up in two days. This was Ayako's first time by herself on a back country trip. The thrill and excitement of being on her own left her almost giddy.

Ayako quickly set up her camp and soon struck out to explore. She scouted nearby Summit, Sixth and Seventh Lakes. The beauty of the scenery was astounding. Ayako wasn't sure if she was out of breath due to the high altitude or the over-



whelming beauty so close at hand. The beautiful green forest reflected in these little jewels like emerald gems. The stark and beautiful Palisade Glacier sparkled beautifully in the afternoon light.

Backpacking in the wilderness has a way of re-arranging one's priorities. Different things become important to us as we become one with our surroundings. Ayako obtained water from a nearby creek for drinking. She admired how cold and clear it was and soon was quenching her thirst. She thought how joyful a thing it is to drink such natural good tasting water. Later that evening, Ayako watched the stars come out as the daytime turned to twilight. The Milky Way was soon visible, along with countless twinkling lights. All was right with the world and she wondered how many others out there may be enjoying this night as much as she.

Ayako spent the entire next day exploring the lakes, basins and glaciers around her camp. Her union with nature became even stronger.

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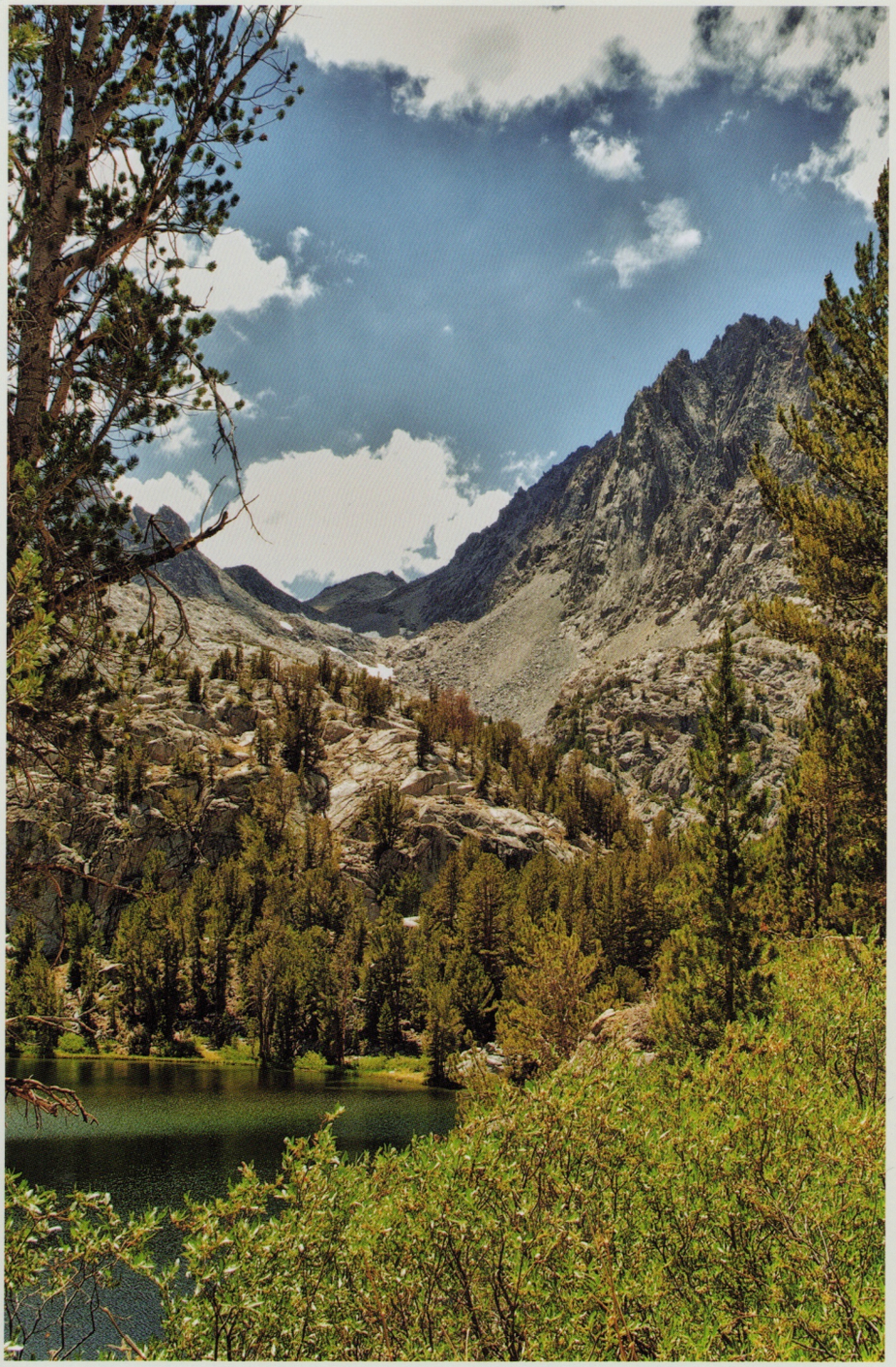

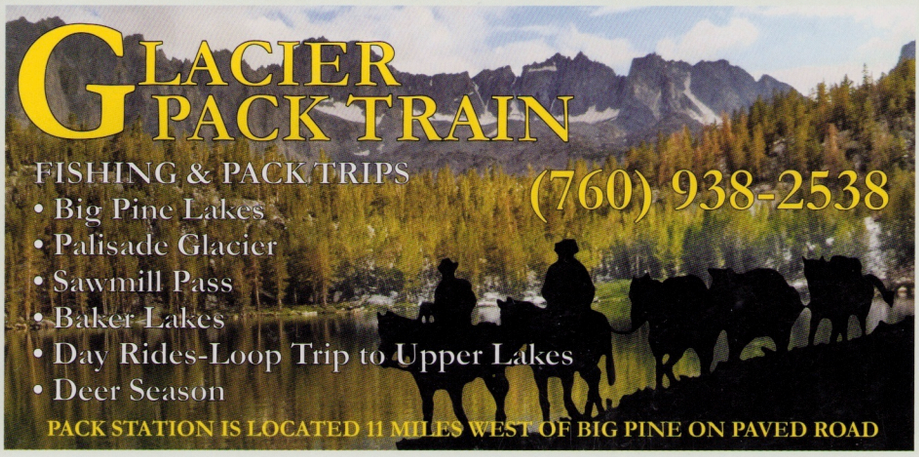

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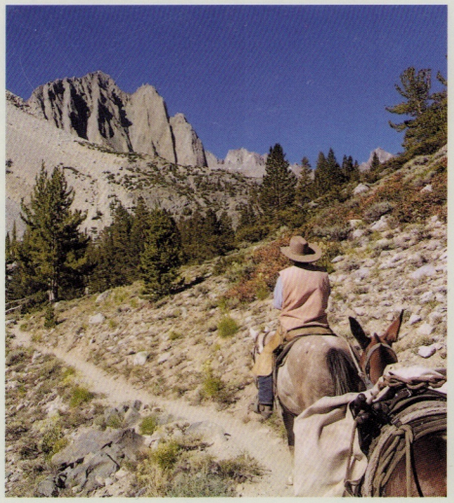
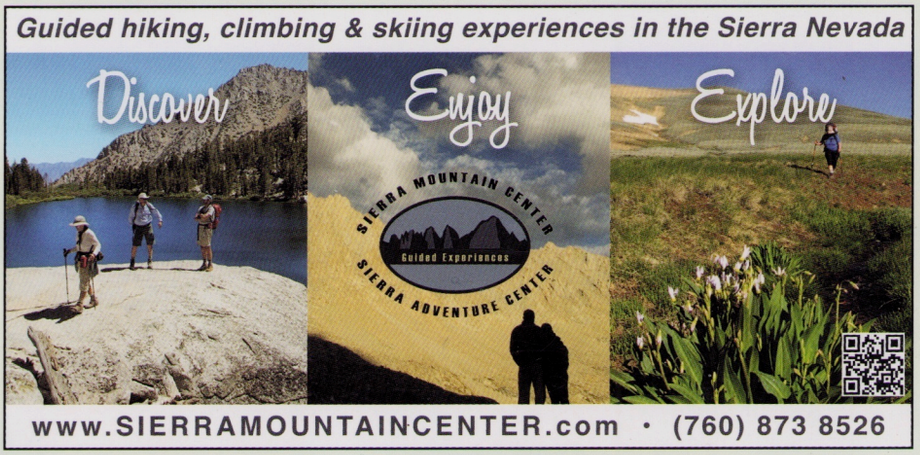
She found hiking was like meditating and reveled at the exhilaration being in this sacred place provided. She felt as if the animals around her knew her thoughts and felt her emotions. At the end of a long day, Ayako returned to camp. The star show from the night before repeated itself with even more glory. Ayako was sad to think her trip would soon come to an end.

Murtt arrived the next morning to pack Ayako and her supplies back out. He was also packing out two other groups that he had previously packed in. They all shared stories of their special time in the mountains as they made their way back. The trip out went all too quickly for Ayako as they soon arrived back at the Pack Station.

Ayako reflected once more about the journey and her time spent in the mountains. Ayako thought how all of nature exists as one in the environment they live in. She felt that to not do all we can to protect such special places, might ultimately bring destruction to mankind. She thought how all living creatures are made up of a perfect balance and to protect and preserve all life is to respect and preserve ourselves. She knew her trip to the Palisade Glacier country would lead her to forever work towards preserving these wonderful and beautiful landscapes for perpetuity.

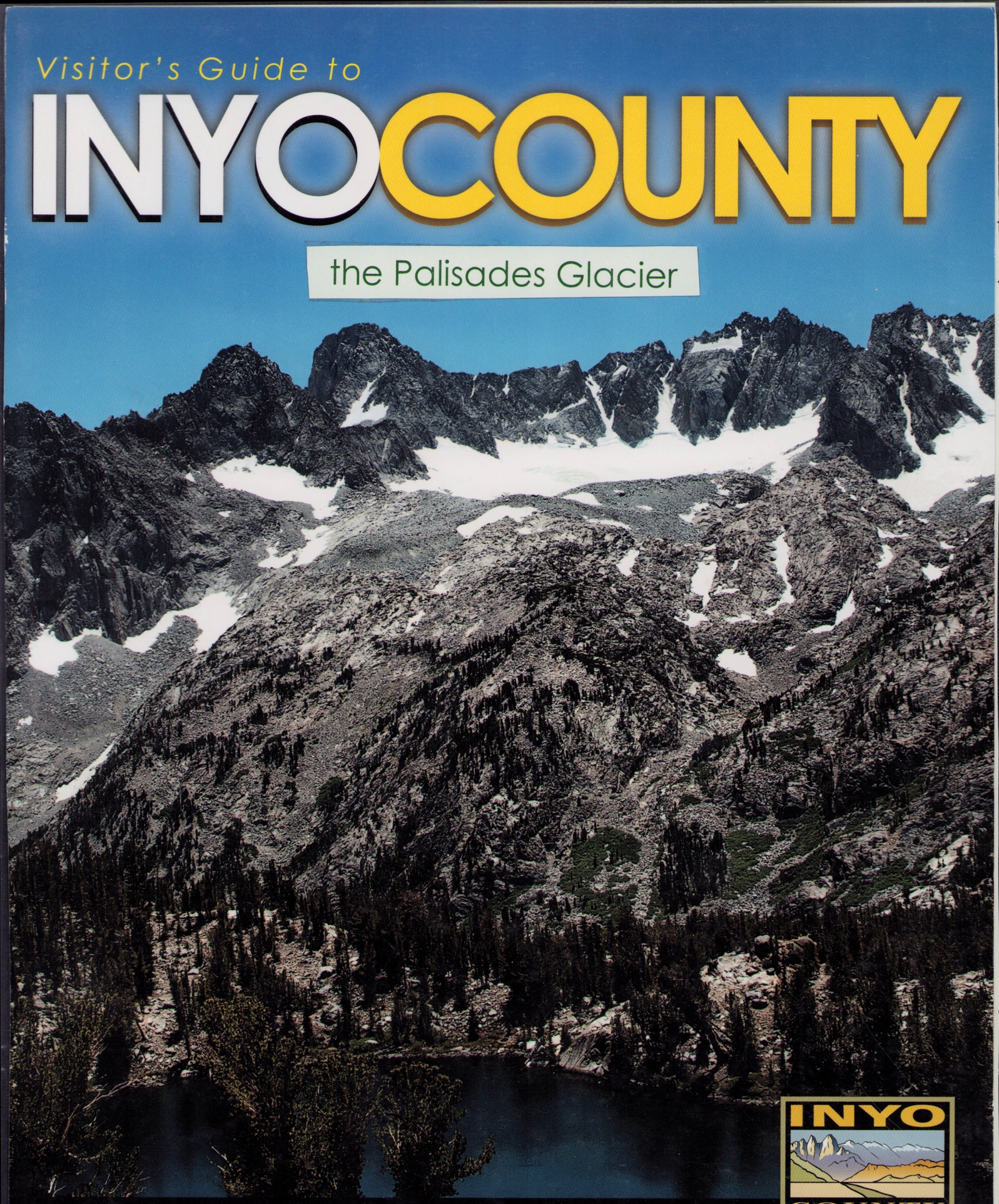




Visitor's Guide to

INYO COUNTY

the Palisades Glacier



SIXTH EDITION

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DEATH VALLEY AND THE EASTERN SIERRA

CALL OF THE PALISADES By Andy Selters

A tribute to John Fischer

What craziness would prompt a man to traverse the longest string of high peaks in the lower 48? That's exactly what the Palisades, above Big Pine, are. A picket fence of sky-high granodiorite—heck, it would be eight miles of continuous climbing. You'd be on edge for a week above 13,000 feet, and probably a hundred times you'd wander into trouble and have to backtrack. Who would look at those mountains sideways and make 'em a route?

Well, John Fischer did, back in 1979, and it was a landmark in North American mountaineering. And he guided it, led the whole way. Crazy? Yeah, John was one of the most crazy, solid, intoxicated, and sober guys I ever knew.

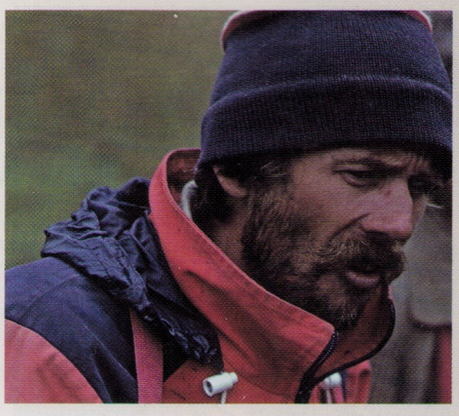
From a childhood in Texas and a rebirth in the Bay Area, John first showed up on the Eastside in the late 1960s, with his buddy Doug Robinson. They'd matriculated from the Sierra Club Basic Mountaineering Training Course to the Haight-Ashbury school of "feed your head and remake the world" and Yosemite's Camp 4. The two ambled up to the base camp of The Palisades School of Mountaineering, and because they were really good, enthusiastic climbers, they were hired.

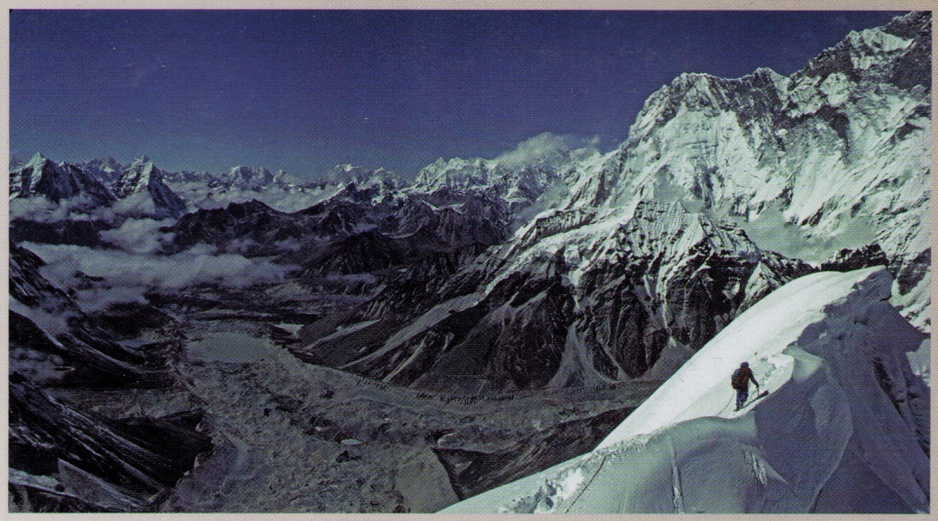
Right away John started seeing possibilities that other guides didn't. For instance, the lore of Temple Crag, an imposing 12,999-foot-high castle below the Sierra crest, was a big stack of loose rock. John noticed the morning sun glinting off the clean facets of the arêtes. He told Don Jensen, head guide then, that they might actually find good climbing there. Jensen took a foray up one of the craggy fins and realized that Fischer was right. On Labor Day of 1969, Fischer and Jensen started back up that feature, called the Sun Ribbon Arête, while their buddies Carl Dreisbach and Pat Armstrong began climbing up the adjacent Moon Goddess Arête. The pairs called back and forth as they progressed. At a deep gap, Jensen and Fischer contrived a North American first: they lassoed a horn 20 feet away, then whooped, hollered and rode their rope across the gap. Then, confronted with a steep tower, John donned his EBs, the snug little *Kletterschuhe* that were a revolution in Yosemite. That was another high-country first. John tiptoed right up and finished the longest route yet in the High Sierra.

A couple of months later, Bishop was in an uproar. Kids and teachers were acting like traitors and hippies, organizing a march against the war. John and Doug brought their long-haired message from the Haight: F the Establishment, they're sending us off to a murderous war. Declare your independence, open the doors of perception and find the Real Truth in the great Sierra. That rang the bells of a few local kids, notably Gordon Wiltsie, Jay Jensen and Carl "P-Nut" McCoy. Bishop's politics have been at play ever since.

That winter, John, his wife Alex, Doug and maybe a dozen others collected into a hippie community. They rented the Cardinal Lodge compound, inhaled deep from open-air refuge and exhaled into all manner of explorations, especially backcountry climbing and skiing. They decided they'd poke fun at officialdom and call themselves the Armadillo Rock Group, after Alex's stuffed mascot. The Armadillos were into expanding, including the judicious use of LSD on climbs.

John was into free expression, but he also was tenacious about competence. He connected to elder climbers. He'd bring Jay and Gordon to climb in Buttermilk country with Smoke Blanchard, and over dinner at Smoke's house on Willow Street they'd meet Norman Clyde.





OPPOSITE: The Palisade chain, where John Fischer and friend first traversed the entire crest, in 1979.
TOP LEFT: John Fischer, a true mountain man.
TOP: Walking where few dare to go high in the Himalaya.
ABOVE: Fischer hanging out in Yosemite National Park.
PHOTOS: OPPOSITE: ANDY SELTERS / THIS PAGE: GORDON WILTSIE

As both John and Doug continued to guide in the Palisades, they started anchoring not with pitons but with metal wedges, "nuts" and "chocks," which you simply slide in and out of the cracks. John was especially keen on them and was quick to obtain the latest designs. Doug became the world's piper for this "clean climbing," penning manifestos that inspired people to the path of "technique ... conforming to the landscape."

By the summer of 1976 Allen Steck had handed the Palisades School of Mountaineering over to John. That was the beginning of the end of the great partnership between John and Doug. People say that their falling-out had to do with how John took on the responsibilities of running a business, while Doug was more committed to less-structured exploration. There was also Doug's stubbornness butting heads with John's temper.

Yes, John's temper. Until you saw it opening into someone like an ax, you couldn't imagine he had such anger. Usually it had to do with him amplifying someone's quirks or flaws into a crime against humanity. And often it came out with alcohol. Rainier Ale was hydration for many guides, and when wine and stronger stuff followed, that could flip John's switch.

Through the 1980s he ran one of the best guide services in the country. Hundreds of people learned the brilliance of technique through his patient, certain voice. He figured out more secrets than anyone: belay methods, managing clients and where to escape from any Palisade route. He also brilliantly pulled together an expedition to Baruntse, a big peak in Nepal—and almost shut down the trip with that temper. Afterward he coordinated an even more brilliant plan, giving Sherpas the skills to climb, guide and earn a living. Giving was large in John's heart.

Guide extraordinaire he was, but businessman he wasn't. When I arrived here in 1990 I worked with John for a while, and then he just announced he was over it, done. Too much competition from rogue guides, he said. I had the bewildered honor of seeing him instruct masterfully, insult away friendships, miraculously survive a drunken car crash and start a new career in skilled carpentry. And he was the only climber I knew who packed cigarettes for lunch.

As I grasp to understand John, I let go to realize that to uncover the secret potential in the mountains, you gotta slide craziness into your kit. I picture his mischievous eyes laughing as he sees me discovering this, his own secret: you can't just take the assumptions fed to you; you have to look around, pour what you see into your hopper and brew it into something real. The safe people, the ones who just follow a sanity image, they are the crazy ones; they drag everyone with inertia.

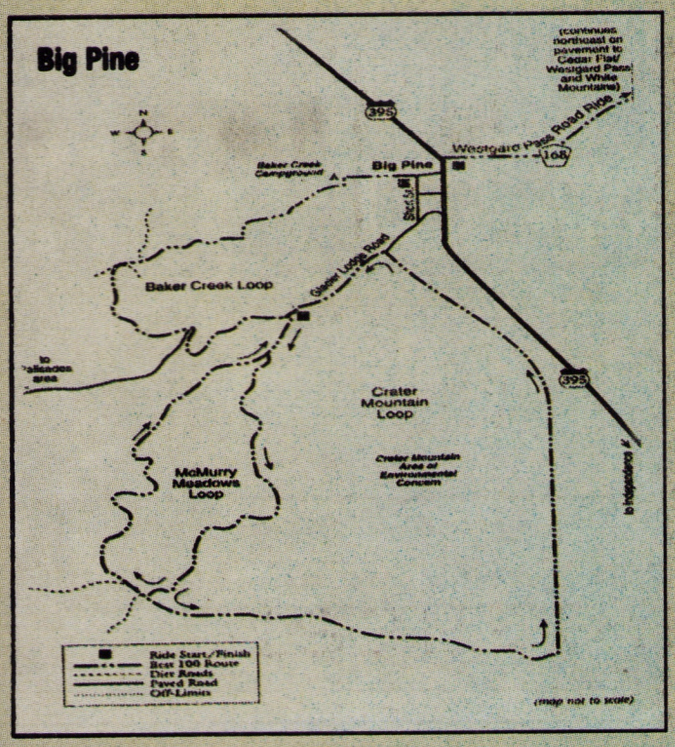
Inside John Fischer ran a coyote, a trickster that unearthed wonder and beauty and wreaked some havoc. It sent him into great climbs, and to vegetarian parties carrying a pepperoni-and-sausage pizza.

Around 2000 John climbed what may have been the hardest and most liberating routes of his life: he quit drinking and smoking. What's more, he helped others do the same. He reconnected with Doug and took joy in showing climbing secrets, including Smoke Blanchard's Buttermilk Obstacle Course, to a new generation.

Last June, near Conway Summit, John passed away after a motorcycle accident with a deer.

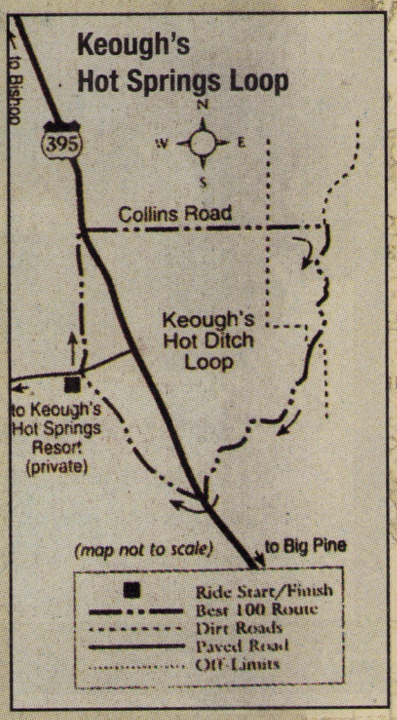
John lived well and shared it thoroughly.

MOUNTAIN BIKING



Keough's Hot Springs Loop This loop is 11.5 miles, and is easy and flat. The loop ride is on broken pavement and dirt roads, and is year-round.

There is natural hot pools at the start of the ride where a series of pools have an incredible view of the Sierra and Inyo mountains.



Westgard Pass Road Ride This round trip is 26 miles, and is strenuous. Elevation from 3900' to 7,300'. You'll travel out and back on pavement. summer, spring, and fall, but check road conditions in spring and fall. Carry 2 qts. of water. Amenities available in Big Pine. This is a challenging road ride up to a mountain pass.

Baker Creek Loop This loop covers 9.4 miles and is a strenuous ride. The loop ride on pavement, dirt road, and single track. Parking, shade, restrooms, picnic tables, and water at Edith Mendenhall Park in Big Pine, at the north end of town. This ride is steep across three canyons, with a fast, fun downhill return.

Crater Mountain Loop This loop is 19/2 miles long, and is moderately strenuous. It starts at 4,000' at Big Pine to 6500' at McMurry Meadows. Ride the spring, summer, and fall. Make sure to carry at least 3-4 pts. of water, as the only facilities are in Big Pine. The loop features fantastic volcanic landscape and a view of the crater mountain. The Basaltic formations in the area range from 10,000-100,000 years old.

McMurry Meadows Loop This loop is 13 miles in length. It is a challenging loop ride on a jeep road. Elevation 3900' at Big Pine to 6500" at McMurry Meadows. Spring, summer and fall are the best times. Carry at least 3-4 pints of water.

See BIKING, page 26

Irma Baker Garner
1915-2010

Services will be held at a later date for former Big Pine resident Irma Baker Garner. Private cremation was held at Eternal Hills Crematory in Klamath Falls, Ore. A private burial was held at Eternal Hills Memorial Gardens in Klamath Falls.

Born on Jan. 26, 1915 on the Baker Ranch in Big Pine, to George and Mary Heinz Baker, Irma died Tuesday, Feb. 9 in Klamath Falls. She was 95.

Irma graduated from Big Pine High School as valedictorian in 1932. Her family sold the Baker Ranch and moved to Fontana, where she attended Chaffee Junior Collage and Pomona College. In 1945 Irma was hired as secretary to the dean of men and women at Fullerton Junior College. A position she held until her retirement in 1971. She moved with her husband, Denver, to the Agency Lake, Ore. area in 1976.

Irma was a well known photographer. Her photos accompanied her husband's many hunting and dog training articles.

At the age of six months she traveled to the Baker Ranch high country summer range by way of pack mule; the first of many trips with her father, George Baker.

At the age of five she named Thunder and Lighting lakes in the High Sierra.

... Biking Continued

from page 13

Andrews Mountain Loop This ride is 25 miles, and is a strenuous expedition across the crest of the Inyo Mountains. You will start at 6600' and at the crest you will be at 9126'.

The loop ride is on primitive roads. Late spring, summer, and early fall, be sure to check with local authorities before setting out. Amenities available in Big Pine. Carry extra clothing, food, first aid and a min. of 2 qts. of water.

Alpine meadows, incredible vistas. Old Mines and cabins.

Grandview Mine Ride This ride is 14 miles in distance, its short, moderate, and steep. The elevation is 8500' at Grandview to the mine at 9200'. You will go out and back on jeep road. Late spring, summer and early fall is a good time to ride. Facilities and parking are at Granview Campground. There is NO water at the campground. Carry at least 3-4 pts. of water.

A spectacular view across Deep Spring Valley, Eureka Valley, Saline Valley, and Death Valley.

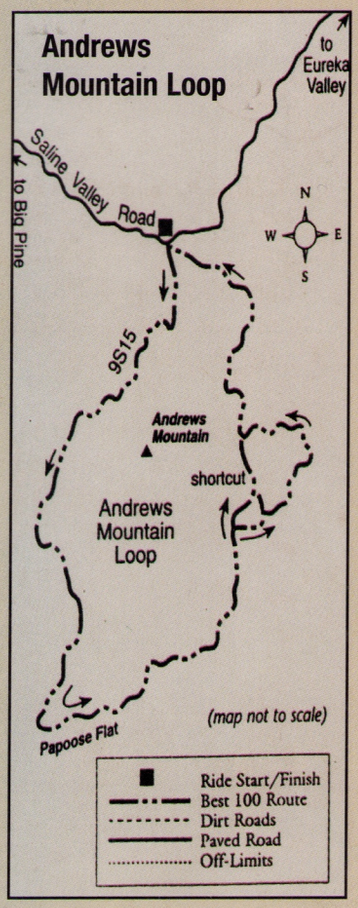
Black Mountain Ride This loop is 11 miles in length, and is moderately difficult. It goes from Cedar Flat, at 6900' to the ridge which is 8750'. You'll ride out and back on primitive jeep road. Late spring, summer and early fall are the best times to go. There are no facilities, carry at least 2 qts. of water.

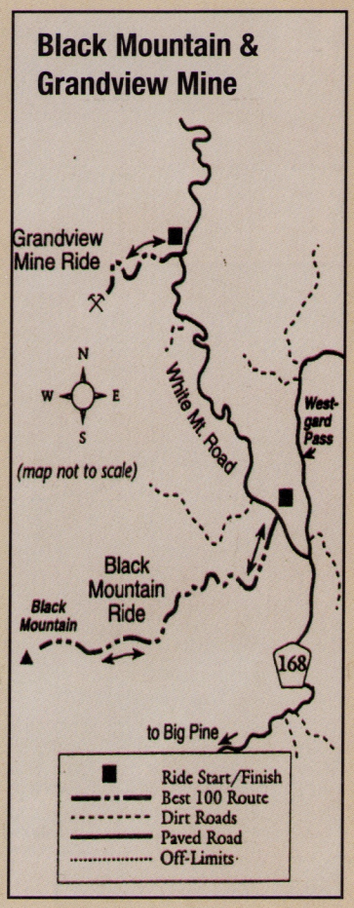
Travel through juniper and pinyon woodlands with great views of the Whites, Owens Valley and the Sierra Black Mountain Silver Mine, with three shafts still active, is on your route.

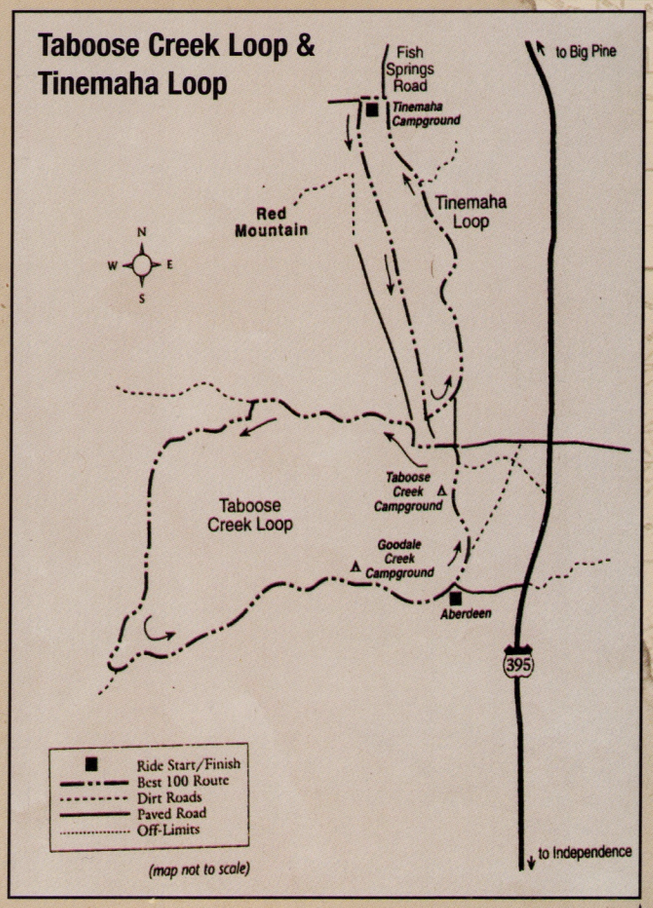
Taboose Creek Loop This loop is 12.5 miles and is difficult and strenuous. The lowest elevation is 3800' to the highest of 5861' in elevation. You'll ride on pavement, dirt road and jeep trail roads. You can ride spring, summer and fall.

Parking, phone, store, water and cafe are in Aberdeen.

It is a challenging ride through volcanic area with views of the Sierra and Inyo's. Aberdeen was once a stop on the Owens Valley stage route.







LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THANK YOU

These memories of Glacier Lodge, in this form, don't appear to be a letter, but that's how the article began. Mrs. Wm. Utter, Sr. wrote to us, relating some of her own recollections triggered by the story in our last issue. She asked that her letter not be published, but we begged and she has kindly written the following story, sharing her memories and some photographs of a beautiful time past and place long gone.

In the early 1920s Big Pine was a small town with a population of around five or six hundred, surrounded by some large ranches whose irrigation water came from Big Pine Creek. Among the businesses, here was a small lumber yard owned by George and Bertha Hall, and a pack station owned by Bob Logan who packed hardy fishermen up to the north fork of Big Pine Creek.

The creek had two branches that came together a short way above the present Glacier Lodge. The south fork was very rugged and few fished it. The north fork had seven lakes, the longest one man-made by a City of Los Angeles dam across the stream.

Among the prominent families were the Stewarts. There were four brothers, Jim and Joe having ranches on each side of Stewart Lane, two vehicle tracks which ran from what is now 395 to the river. The other two brothers, Bill and Bert, had a large band of sheep. In the summer they all headquartered in a small cabin built on a wide spot on the south side of the creek called Sage Flat, and tended their animals from there. At that time there were no other buildings on either branch of Big Pine Creek, except a power house about four miles out of Big Pine, owned by the City of Los Angeles.

About 1925 Bertha Hall persuaded some friends by the name of Combo, from the Los Angeles area, to build a lodge a short distance from where the two branches of the stream came together. I do not know if Bertha was financially interested in the lodge, but she may have been.

My husband Bill and I, with a baby boy less than a year old, went up there to work. I did the cooking and he cut wood for all of the stoves, the only way of cooking and heating, and took guests fishing or on trips just to see or take pictures of the area.

About the same time Glacier Lodge was built, Bob Logan put a pack station about a quarter mile down stream, on the north side where the road ran. From there he packed to any of the seven lakes upstream. One of his packers was named Wes Blair and during the winter, when both places were closed, he and some friends would go over into Fish Lake Valley which was mostly open range. They would find a bunch of wild horses, chase them with an old pickup until they tired, then rope them from horseback, break them and bring them back to the valley to sell. Bob Logan used many of them for his pack train.

We worked at the lodge for two years. When the City of Los Angeles built Tinemaha Dam, my husband went to work there until it was finished. In the meantime a new owner of Glacier Lodge put a tent camp on the side of the mountain northwest of Fourth Lake, looking toward the glacier. During this time we had a daughter and another son.

Walter Dow, who built the Dow Hotel in Lone Pine, then bought both lodges. As he had known my parents when I was a child, he asked us to manage the upper lodge, the first year still in tents.

Upper Lodge, 'The Camp.'
Photo courtesy Mrs. Wm. Utter.

The next spring he built the rock fireplace, the fireplace and wood box taking up most of the east end of the building. All other sleeping quarters were tents.

Sometime during these years, the original Lon Cheney built his cabin between Third and Fourth lakes. He was an actor, quite small and very kind. He did not use a pole and line to catch fish. He lay on his belly, very quiet, and caught the fish he ate with his bare hands. He was afraid if he caught one on a hook, it might get away and die as a result of being hooked. His son was a large man, over six feet tall and weighing over 200 lbs. We always wondered if he was adopted.

Two young men, one trying to train the other to be a boxer, came to the camp one year. One of them caught a six or seven inch fish and just as he had it where he thought he could pick it up, another fish between two and three feet long swam by, grabbed the smaller fish and swam off with it, breaking his line without even knowing it was there.

Once a doctor came up with his adopted triplets and Bill took him to the glacier lake to fish. When he pulled in his line with his favorite fly, it caught on the edge of the ice. Bill dug his heels into the iceberg and held the doctor by his feet while he crawled down to get his fly. The water was so clear in the glacial lake that you could let a line out as far as it would go with a salmon egg on it and still see the egg.

Once Mr. Dow sent word up to the Camp by the packer that he was entertaining a group of City officials and wanted 75 fish to serve for dinner the following night. My husband and older son started catching the fish, and shortly after noon the next day had them all. Bill put them in a wet canvas bag, took it on his back and had them down at the lodge in time for dinner that night. He hiked back to the Camp rather pleased that he had done it — and it was appreciated.

The glacier was first explored by four or five men from Big Pine. I can remember three of them. Ed Ober, who was a Game Warden at the time, Sam McMurray, and Harry Mendenhall, who owned a camera shop and took pictures all over the Sierras. These men scratched their names and the date, which should still be visible, on one of the huge rocks. There were deep breaks, perhaps a couple of feet wide, in the glacier and one could shout down into them and hear the echo for several minutes.

As was mentioned in a previous article, Bob Clunie did much of his painting in areas all over the Sierras. He put his camp among the trees west of the Camp many times, and would join us around the fire in the evenings, rarely saying a word, but enjoying the company.

And there was Norman Clyde. He was a school teacher in Independence, a rather secluded individual not particularly liked by the students. One Halloween, some of them decided to bother him by pounding tin cans and making other loud noises. He asked them to go away several times and when they didn't, he fired his gun into the air. When the school board and townspeople learned of it, his teaching license was taken away and he became a mountaineer, writing articles and books. It made him a very meager living but he found rest in the solitude. Many others who know the Sierras feel that their rugged beauty compares favorably with the Swiss Alps.

Writing this has brought back many memories and I know I will be remembering more as the days pass. We have been back to the lower lodge a time or two after moving to Bishop but never to the Camp. The authorities that had the Camp destroyed and the rugged rock building town down cannot know how many people were denied the pleasure of seeing and enjoying the beauty of that part of our world.

Bill Jr., Betty and Bob Utter at 'The Camp.'
Photo courtesy Mrs. Wm. Utter.

Big Pine Creek

Palisade Glacier
© ERIN LUTRIK

Palisades Glacier is the southernmost glacier in the United States. Located above Big Pine, CA in the Sierra Nevada range, it is clearly visible from US Highway 395. From the Glacier Lodge, 8 miles from US Highway 395, there are several trails to follow to this ancient glacier. Lakes are abundant along the trails as well as fascinating geological features.

The trail to the Palisades Glacier is about one half mile above Third Lake. The switchbacks lead through grassy benches and boulders to Sam Mack Meadow. The final half mile to the glacier requires much boulder hopping and the trail is very obscure. Hikers can meander safely along the lower part of the glacier where the slope is gentle, but should avoid the upper reaches unless well experienced on ice and snow.

The South Fork trail climbs up beneath the jagged peaks of the Palisade Crest and gives access to the Middle Palisade Glacier. Along the trail are a few gnarled Limber Pines growing on the steep slopes below Willow Lake. The few lakes in the South Fork of Big Pine Canyon contain both Brook and Golden Trout. Brainard Lake is a favorite of those seeking to catch the prized golden.

Big Pine Creek offers a real treat for the more experienced hiker. Hike past numerous lakes and enjoy views of Palisade Glacier, the largest glacier in the Sierra and the southernmost active glacier in North America. Middle Palisade Glacier can be spotted from the parking area near Glacier Lodge. The glacier can be reached by a strenuous nine-mile hike from the road end in Big Pine Canyon. Palisade Crest, rising above 14,000 feet, contains some of the finest and most challenging alpine climbing in California.

In 1929, Long Chaney Sr. built a stone cabin in the remote wilderness of the Eastern Sierra Nevada, near Big Pine as a retreat. The cabin (designed by architect Paul Williams) still stands, and is preserved by the Inyo National Forest Service.

Mt. Agassiz (13,893 ft.) West Face / class 2
This the easiest peak to climb in the Palisades Group. The Palisades are the largest group of peaks in the Sierra that exceed 14,000 ft.in elevation. Another unique quality of this region is the lack of gently sloping access from the west side. This is the most extreme section of the High Sierra Crest. The Palisades region is considered to hold some of the finest alpine climbing opportunities in the entire range.

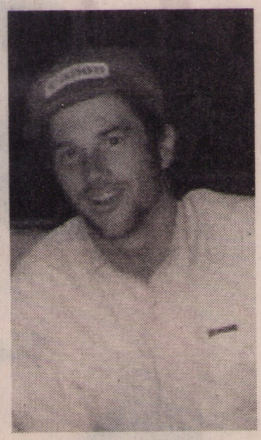
To access the easiest route, up the easiest peak in the Palisades, one must first hike to Bishop Pass. From there, the route is obvious amongst the vertical cliffs of this area. The climb/hike to the summit is rated class 2, which is considered steep hiking, off trail. The route can go many different ways up the west slope, but generally holds to the spur, which rises from the pass directly to the summit. The views are spectacular from this peak.

Big Pine Tree with Palisades Glacier in backgound

2012

KARL RANSOM WEBER

June 6, 1952 - March 2017



"Randy" was born to Karl Forman Weber and Mary Louise (Bunny) Hunter Weber in Los Angeles, CA on June 6, 1952. He was the oldest of six children, survived by his five siblings; Cynthia Davidson (Tom), Paul Weber, Mary Brint (Andy), Terry Weber and Tim Weber. He also leaves behind his step-parents; Carl Verheyen Sr. and Tina Weber and also six step-siblings; Carl Verheyen (Carol), Carolyn Verheyen, Katie Verheyen (Mark), Ken Verheyen (Tara), Tori McGough (Sean) and Jason Anderson (Alicia), also a large extended family including aunts and uncles, and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

Most of Randy's childhood years were spent in Pasadena, CA where he attended St. Bede's elementary school and St. Francis High School. He also attended Santa Clara University before moving to the Mammoth Lakes area in the mid '70's.

Randy was always an avid outdoorsman. He loved skiing, hiking and backpacking. He worked in the restaurant business and in his later years became quite knowledgeable in computer technology. He also had a strong interest in geology and was intrigued with the area of the Eastern Sierra's where he called home and camped for the last 30+ years of his life.

Randy chose to live simply, his home nature, where he felt most comfortable. He passed away in the solitude of his campsite where we hope he was at peace. His family and loved ones ask that if anyone knew Randy to please contact us at randyweber@yahoo.com.

ROUTE 10

BIG PINE CANYON

WITNESS THE WORK OF THE ICE AGE ON THIS ROUTE INTO THE GLACIER-CARVED HIGH SIERRA. HERE THE POWERFUL FORCES OF NATURE EASILY OVERWHELM THE TEMPORARY TOUCH OF HUMANKIND—AS SHOWN BY A MOUNTAIN RESORT THAT HAS BEEN ERASED THREE TIMES BY FIRE AND ICE.

What to expect: This road brings you well up into the mountains but with a gradual climb. The entire route is paved and snow is cleared in winter, but use extreme caution and 4WD when it's icy—there are some precipitous drop-offs.

Length: 10.6 miles one way.

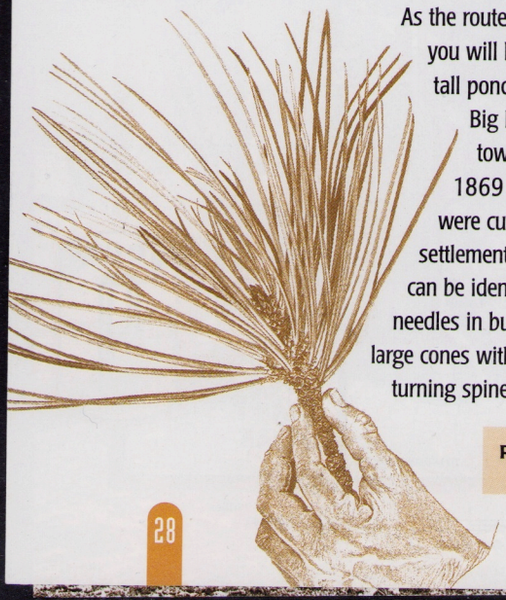
Driving time: Half an hour one way, if the road is dry.

Getting there: From Big Pine at the traffic light in the center of town, turn from U.S. 395 west onto Crocker Street and you will have begun the route.

Along the route: Continue straight west on Crocker Street as it becomes Glacier Lodge Road. As the route leaves town it crosses a meadow bordered by a north-south line of trees, just where the land begins to rise toward the mountains. This is a fault scarp formed during the great Owens Valley earthquake of 1872, which had its epicenter at Lone Pine 45 miles to the south. It was reported that fissures also opened on the nearby valley floor, shooting columns of water more than 100 feet into the air. Seismic activity like this, and countless lesser quakes, are responsible for lifting the steep eastern face of the Sierra and readying it for the carving action of glaciers.

Beyond this you'll see two lines of trees extending down from the mountains: these mark Big Pine Creek to your left and Baker Creek to your right. Capt. J.W. Davidson and his 1859 expedition used the area between the two creeks as a major campsite, calling it "Dragoon Forks."

As the route approaches the canyon you will begin to encounter the tall ponderosa pines for which Big Pine was named. The town was established in 1869 and many of the pines were cut for lumber as the settlement grew. Ponderosa pines can be identified by their long needles in bundles of three, and large cones with prickly outward-turning spines.



Ponderosa pine needles
©JOY FATOOH

Ski tow in Big Pine Canyon, c. 1938
COURTESY U.S. FOREST SERVICE

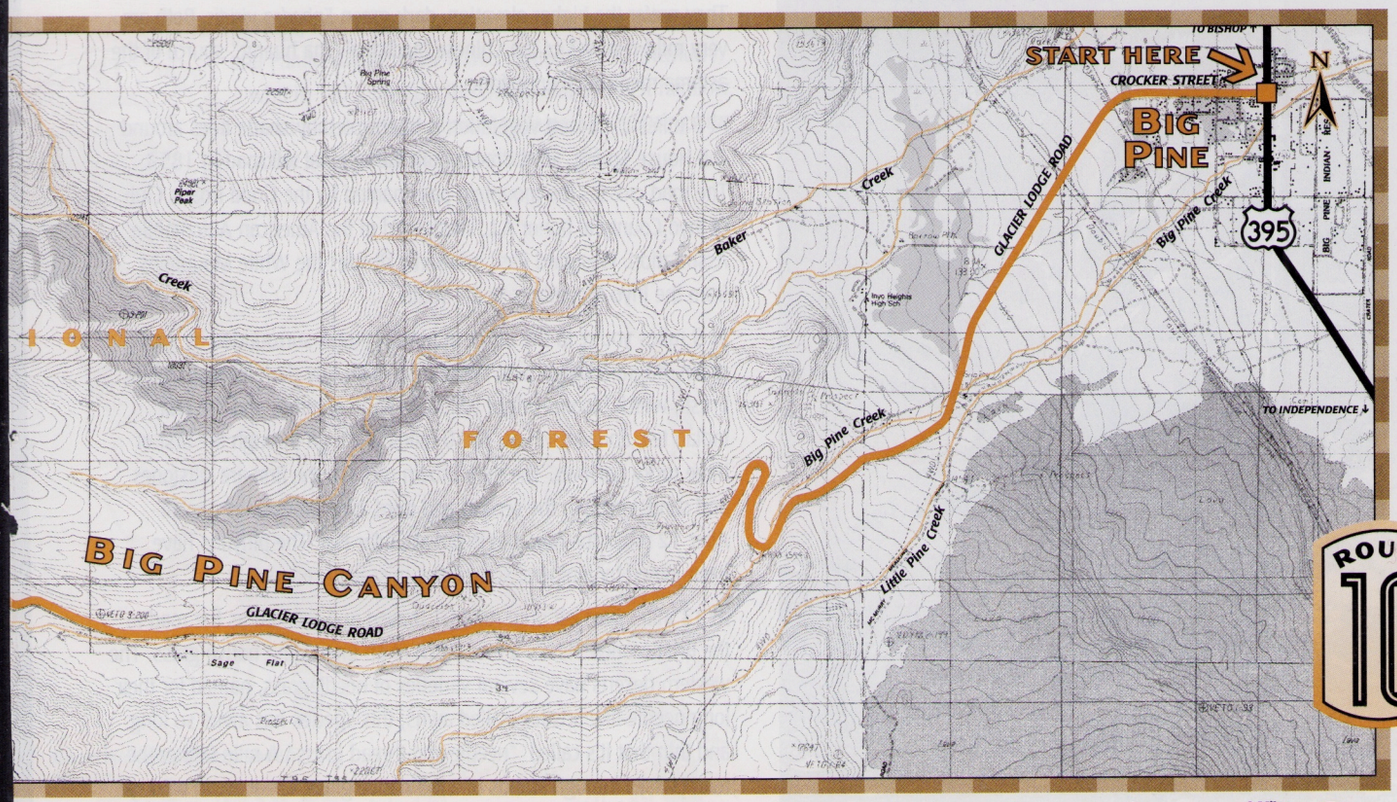
Big Pine Canyon is a beautiful example of the work of Ice Age glaciers that cut the jagged Sierra skyline, pushing piles of loose rock as they slowly moved. The boulder-strewn sides of the canyon are called lateral moraines, "moraine" being French for "rubble pile." Four miles into the route, the road climbs out of the canyon and up onto the top of one of these gigantic detritus heaps that the glaciers left behind.

As the climate warmed over the past few thousand years, the Sierra's glaciers melted. Eight miles from the end of this route, via the North Fork (Big Pine Lakes) hiking trail, is a surviving remnant: Palisade Glacier, the southernmost permanent glacier in North America. The glacier now covers only one square mile, but during the Ice Age it extended down to 5,000 feet elevation—almost to the valley floor.

Only a rugged few will want to attempt to reach the glacier in a long, rigorous day hike. For somewhat less ambitious hikers, within three miles of the trailhead (and a 1500-foot elevation climb) is a stone cabin built by actor Lon Chaney. The trail continues toward the glacier along a series of lakes, each one differently colored by varying amounts of glacial silt.

And with no hike required at all, there is—usually—Glacier Lodge at the end of this route. What with fire and avalanche, this private resort on Inyo National Forest land is about to begin its fourth incarnation.

Big Pine Canyon's high country
©JOY FATOOH

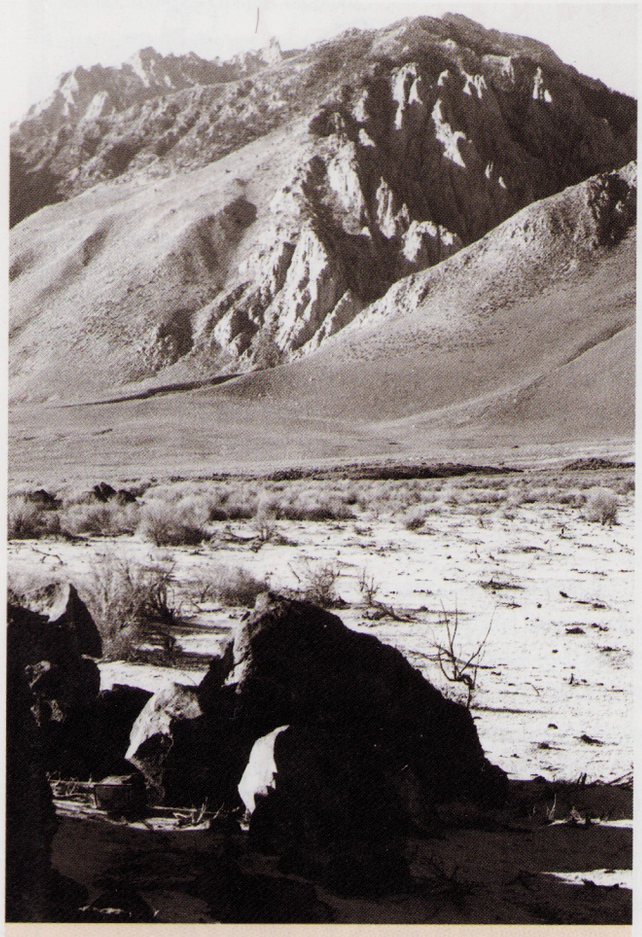


1 0 1 2 3 Miles
SCALE

ROUTE 9

Old Hwy 395 • Aberdeen • Fish

This easy route takes you less than a mile from today's Hwy. 395 but more than a century into the past — back to a time when the main roadway through the Eastern Sierra was nothing but a pair of wagon tracks. Take this pre-1962 route to see spectacular scenery at a leisurely pace, with the ghosts of fruit farmers and prospectors as your fellow travelers.



The jagged walls of Sawmill Canyon are a haven for rare Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep. In the foreground, black volcanic rocks contrast sharply with the soft hues of the valley floor
©JOY FATOOH

The striking multitude of rocks along Hwy 395 south of Big Pine look like almost freshly cooled flows of lava, but the black color of the jagged deposits is actually a dark form of an amazing biogeochemical phenomena called Desert Varnish or Desert Patina - a thin layer of colonies of microscopic bacteria living on the rock surface for thousands of years.

What to expect: Easy driving, open year-round. Much of the route is paved and the unpaved parts are graded and well-maintained.

Length: 14.5 miles one way; 17.7 miles if you loop back via the "new" highway.

Driving time: about one hour.

Getting there: From Independence starting at the flashing traffic light in the center of town, go 8.3 miles north on U.S. 395 and turn left (west) onto Black Rock Springs Road. From Big Pine starting at the high school at the south end of town, go 17.5 miles south on 395 and turn right onto Black Rock Springs Road. (Or begin at the north end of the route, turning right onto Fish Springs Road 4.3 miles south of Big Pine.)

Along the route: Black Rock Springs Road leads straight toward the Sierra at one of its most ruggedly scenic points, Sawmill Canyon. A flume once carried wood from the creek to a nearby sawmill. Today, rare Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep come to the mouth of the canyon when deep winter snows drive them to lower elevations.

In less than a mile, the road meets old 395 at a grove of locust trees planted in the early 1890s to furnish wood for alkaline-tolerant fence posts. Turn right and drive north through black basalt lava flows. You'll pass the road to Division Creek Powerhouse, a working hydroelectric plant originally built in 1908 to power dredges digging the Los Angeles Aqueduct.

Aberdeen, at 5 miles along the route, was a small but thriving community in the first two decades of the 20th century—supported primarily by the Red Mountain Fruit Ranch to the north. The store and restaurant, open seasonally, features an old fireplace, historic photos and John Wayne's favorite beans.

The paved route becomes the black cinder "Tinemaha Road" where it intersects the road to Goodale Creek, site of a BLM campground. About a mile farther is Taboose Creek and a county campground. Taboose is derived from a Shoshone word for the edible ground nut or yellow nut grass, once a staple food for native Paiutes who irrigated meadows to enhance its growth.

SPRINGS

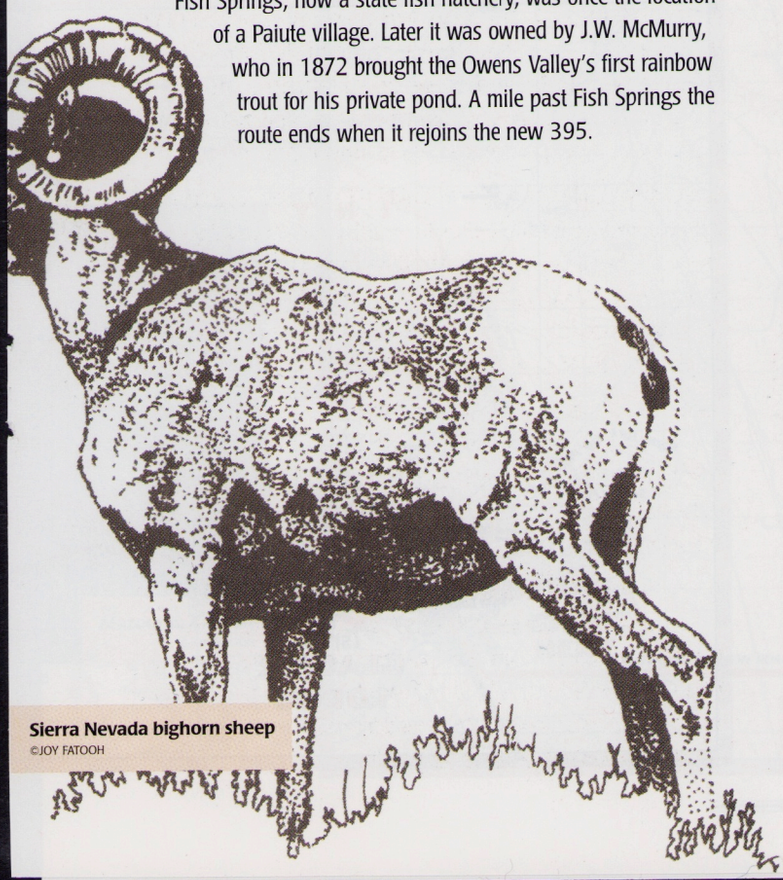
Rainbow trout
©LAURA PATTERSON

From here, the graded dirt road heads into the Poverty Hills, named by disgusted gold miners when their extensive claims produced less than hoped. To the west you can see Red Mountain, the youngest volcanic cinder cone in the Owens Valley, formed only 600-800 years ago.

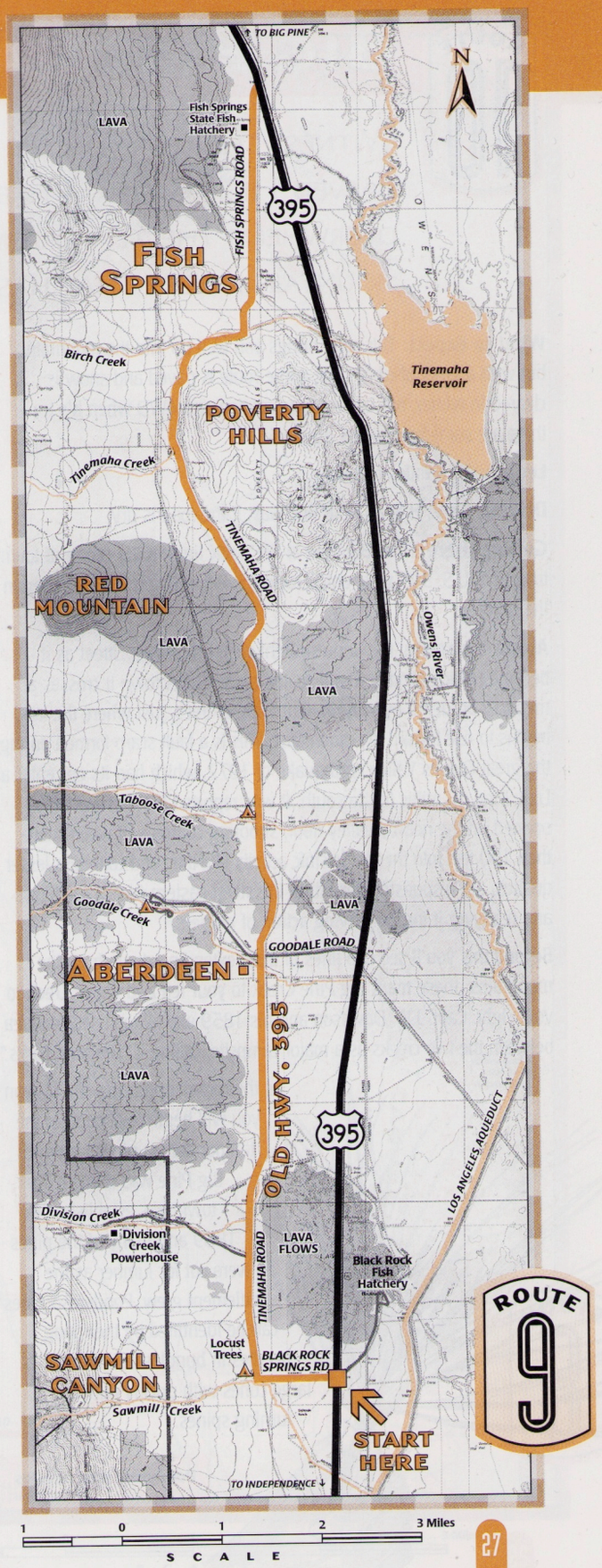
The road turns back into pavement as it crosses Tinemaha Creek, named for a legendary Paiute war chief. In the early 1900s this site was part of the thousand-acre Red Mountain Fruit Ranch. You can find remnants of the extensive irrigation system west of the county campground.

After crossing Birch Creek, 12 miles from the beginning of the route, you'll reach an intersection with no sign. Bear left (north), taking the road that passes a small hill of black rock. In half a mile is another intersection; continue north.

Fish Springs, now a state fish hatchery, was once the location of a Paiute village. Later it was owned by J.W. McMurry, who in 1872 brought the Owens Valley's first rainbow trout for his private pond. A mile past Fish Springs the route ends when it rejoins the new 395.

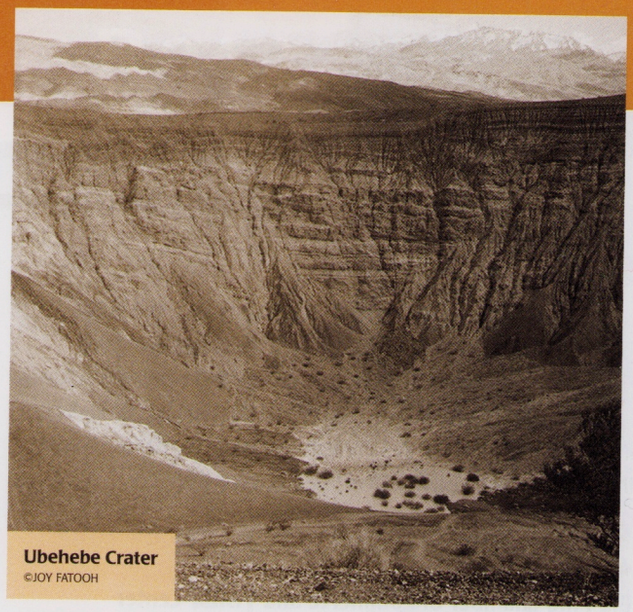


Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep
©JOY FATOOH

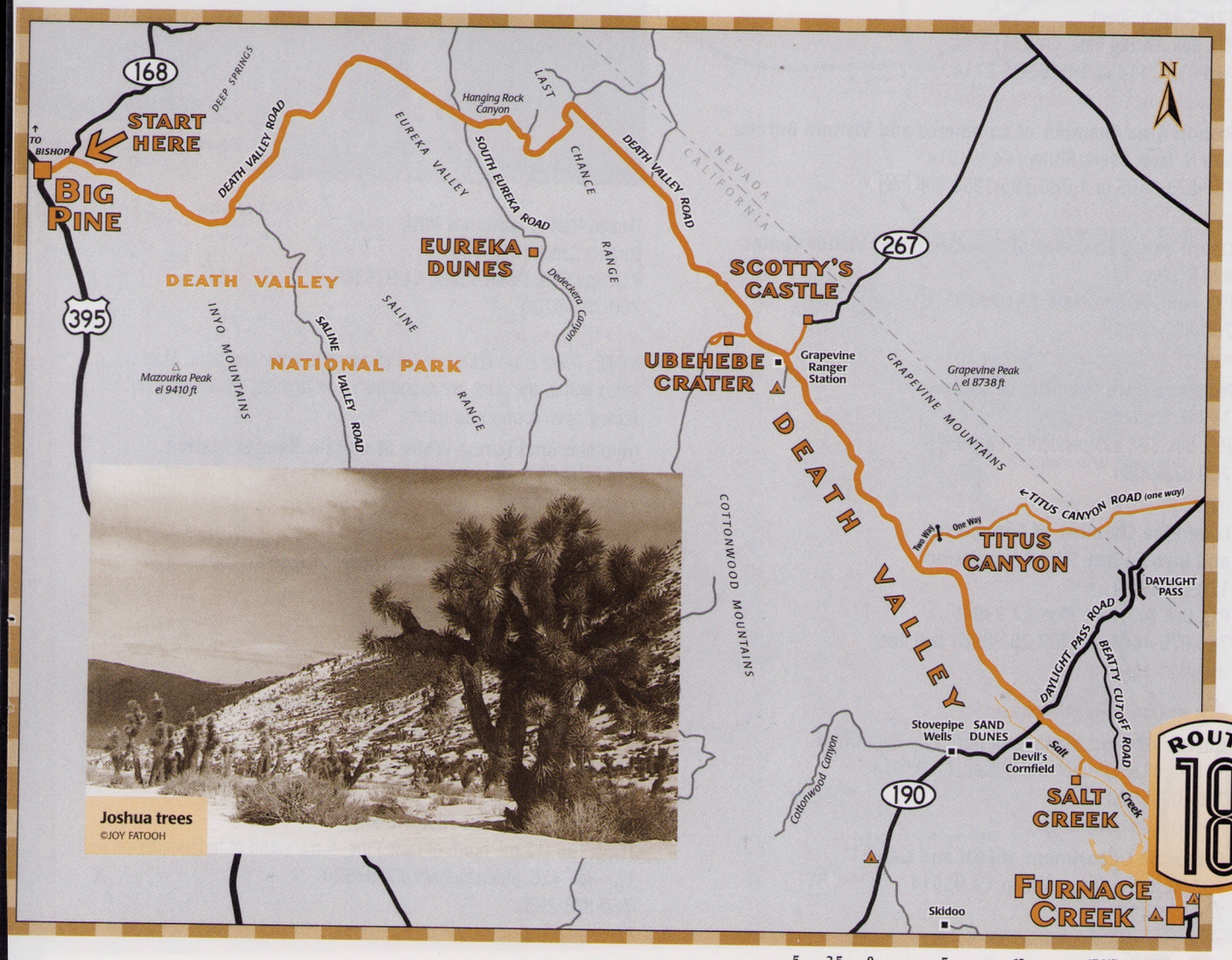


him continue the ruse that their vacation home was built with income from his secret mine. Tickets for tours are sold on the grounds. If you love old junk, pick up a Tie Canyon trail guide at the ticket booth and hike through the historic storage yard.

Back on the main road, proceed through the Park entrance station. (Fee required.) After 18 miles you may choose a quick side trip to Titus Canyon, with walls hundreds of feet high only 20 feet apart. Continuing along the main road brings views of colorfully striped mountains and vast sand dunes. At the T intersection with Highway 190 turn left toward Furnace Creek. Within 7 miles is a short spur road to the home of the Salt Creek pupfish, one of the amazing local species that have adapted to an incredible array of harsh desert conditions. Furnace Creek, which has a visitor center, food, lodging and camping, is the end of the route.



Ubehebe Crater
©JOY FATOOH



Joshua trees
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the sheet
News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra
Saturday, December 8, 2018 FREE

Crestfallen over water

Dear Editor:

On September 26 I attended a meeting in Mammoth where LADWP began the scoping process concerning renewal of grazing leases in Long Valley. Several comments were put forth that DWP was extracting more water from Long Valley so that it could sell it to Ridgecrest, a town in the Indian Wells Valley in eastern Kern County.

At first I thought that this was just another Eastern Sierra water rumor. Boy was I wrong! Following are excerpts from the two Reports on the Indian Wells Valley water supply referenced at the end of this letter:

• The Indian Wells Valley groundwater basin is in overdraft and has been since the 1960s, and the severity meets the definition of a "critical condition of overdraft."

• Groundwater pumping is now three to five times greater than basin yield.

• Municipal and agricultural water use accounts for 70 to 80 percent of total groundwater pumping.

Recent agricultural expansion has increased alfalfa fields from 870 acres to 990 acres and pistachio orchards from 300 to 2,500 acres (Todd Engineers, 2014). Water use by pistachio crops is projected to increase agricultural water demand by approximately 70 percent by 2025, when these orchards reach maturity (Todd Engineers, 2014).

• Agricultural water demand will increase as newly planted trees mature; in addition, new acreage may be planted, representing a potential substantial increase in pumping.

• The magnitude of the overdraft indicates that recovery cannot be achieved with conservation or water recycling alone without jeopardizing beneficial uses; importation of supplemental water is needed.

• The imported water would need to be delivered from the Los Angeles Aqueduct to Ridgecrest. The shortest distance between the aqueduct and the IWVWD distribution system is about 6 miles.

• LADWP would exchange water from Mono or Inyo County with water that arrives to Southern California from some other region such as the Delta or the Colorado River.

• The Kern County Board of Supervisors should apply its influence to initiate a regional interagency effort to plan and implement a water importation project. This process will certainly involve LADWP and probably involve the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, a regional water wholesaler, the State Water Project, Central Valley Project and state-level elected officials, in addition to a local team consisting of the Planning & Community Development Department, Kern County Water Agency and Indian Wells Valley CGMG.

2.Indian Wells Valley's critically overdrafted aquifers currently supply water for : Municipal uses - primarily the city of Ridgecrest (which boasts about twice the population of Mono County), the China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, and the rapidly expanding agricultural sector.

Pistachio orchards have become quite popular in Kern County, contributing to its rise to the top agricultural county in the USA, and enhancing its considerable influence in California agricultural water distribution.

The money LADWP would receive from selling its aqueduct water to Indian Wells Valley would enable them to purchase replacement water from the agencies mentioned above. However Indian Wells Valley would be solely dependent on Inyo and Mono counties for its imported water. The addition of power players such as the Department of Defense and Kern County Agriculture into our water politics pipeline would likely increase demand and cause the eyes of Southern California to cast ever more covetous eyes northward.

1. Groundwater Resource Sustainability: Modeling Evaluation for the Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, California Desert Research Institute Nevada System of Higher Education - Reno, Nevada, September 2016

2. Indian Wells Valley Resource Opportunity Plan - Water Availability and Conservation Report, Jan. 2014. Todd Engineers - 2490 Mariner Square Loop, Suite 215 Alameda, Ca 94501-1080 510-747-6920, www.toddengineers.com

Gary Nelson
Mono City

This statue of Alice Piper, an early Native American civil rights hero, was unveiled in 2014.

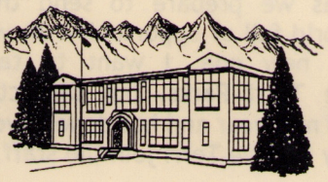
The Big Pine Beacon

News from Big Pine Unified School District

May 15, 2012
Volume 3 Number 3

Superintendent, Pamela Jones
Principal, Carlos Padilla

High Expectations and Individual Attention
A Plan for Each Child



Message from the Superintendent

By Pamela Jones, Superintendent

The Alice Piper Memorial Statue Project

A Collaborative Effort of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley and the Big Pine Unified School District

Alice Piper was a 15-year-old Native American girl living in Big Pine, California in 1924. She, along with other Indian students in Big Pine, wanted to attend Big Pine High School, but was denied because she was a Native American. State law prohibited Indian children from attending the public school in a town if an Indian school existed within a radius of three miles. Such a school did exist in Big Pine. It was a one-room schoolhouse with an Indian school curriculum prescribed by the federal government and with a stated mission of assimilation and preparation for jobs in service and manual labor. Piper, the daughter of Pike and Annie Piper, wanted access to the opportunities of the public high school. She sued the school district claiming the state law establishing separate schools for Indian children was unconstitutional.

The State Supreme Court ruled that the law was in violation of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. As a result, Piper, and any other Native American children who so wished, were invited to attend the Big Pine School District schools. Due to this historic action, the Big Pine School District, and the Native American girl Alice Piper, are memorialized as major players in the constitutional battle over the rights of Native Americans to attend public schools segregated for "whites only."

The Piper case has become a landmark in court law. It is viewed as the legal authority guaranteeing Native right to attend public schools, and has been used as precedence in other cases such as ***Brown v. Board of Education***, the 1954 court ruling that "separate-but-equal," segregation of public schools violates the 14th Amendment guarantee of Equal Protection.

Today, nine decades later, the Big Pine School District continues to serve the 200 kindergarten through 12th grade students and families of our community. Approximately 45% of the students are Native American. We enjoy a positive and collaborative relationship with the Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley.

Alice's battle to attend the school of her choice is not known by many. Her contribution, the Native American contribution, to the history of school desegregation deserves to be honored and remembered. A beautiful bronze statue would serve as a reminder to the world that an equal and just education is the right and privilege of all children.

The Big Pine School District Board, the Big Pine Paiute Tribal Council, and the Big Pine Tribal Cultural Committee, wish to install a life-sized bronze statue of Alice at the front of the school. We envision her standing there in front of the flag pole, books in her arms, demonstrating to all who pass by on Highway 395 in front of the school that we stand up for equality and excellence in the education of the young people in our country.

The cost of the statue and installation is estimated at approximately $30,000. Your contributions can help make this dream a reality.

Open House

May 24, 2012
5:30-6:30 pm K-6
6:00-7:00 pm 7-12

Upcoming Events

- ★ May 14 - 18 - 6th Grade Book Fair
- ★ May 16 - Family Night Book Fair
- ★ May 19 - Saturday School
- ★ May 24 - Open House - Minimum Day
- ★ May 25 - Sadie Hawkins/ASB Election
- ★ May 28 Memorial Day - NO SCHOOL
- ★ May 30 - Citizens Oversight Committee Meeting
- ★ May 31 - Walk through History
- ★ June 3 - Awards Banquet
- ★ June 4 - Board Meeting
- ★ June 6 - Elementary Swim Party
- ★ June 7 - Graduation/ Last Day of School - Minimum Day

Alice Piper Statue Project Dream Closer to Reality

By Pamela Jones, Superintendent

Take a look at the artist's rendition of the statue commemorating the Alice Piper vs. Big Pine Supreme Court Decision. This design is a team effort of Big Statue artist Matt Glenn, and local Paiute artist Robert Gutierrez who created the portrait image. The District, in collaboration with the Big Pine Paiute Tribe, plans to place this life-sized statue in front of the school as a reminder to all of this important historical event, and of our dedication to educating the youth in our community to the best of our ability. We are now in search of grant funding and welcome donations at the school in care of the Piper Memorial Statue.

In addition to the Statue Project, we have plans for more enhancements to the front of the school grounds. The statue will have native plants at the base. The garden bed in front of the solar project fronting the highway is being planted with a variety of dwarf pine trees, including Pinion, that will screen the front of the solar project but not shade it. Our long-term goals also include repurposing the tennis courts for multi-court use. Our vision is that our District facilities will shine and show the public that Big Pine has pride and cares about our children, who are our future.

Time Warp Tuesday

Big Pine History

Big Pine Indian Day School. This image became particularly important in the recent project to get the Alice Piper statue created in front of Big Pine High School. This is the only known image of Piper who is in the back row, far left.

Courtesy Laws Museum

2-14-2014

Above: Alice Piper and fellow students in the only photo available of the pioneering civil rights activist. Right: A replica, scaled model of a statue that will be placed at Big Pine High School to honor Piper and her fight for equal rights for Native Americans. A fundraising campaign is being launched in coming days. Top photo from files; photo at right courtesy Pamela Jones

Honoring Alice Piper

Piper v Big Pine School District set a precedent for school desegregation

By Deb Murphy
Register Staff

Ninety years ago, a 15-year old Native American girl from Fish Lake Valley took an important step toward access to quality education. Alice Piper and six unnamed co-plaintiffs sued the Big Pine School District and prevailed in the California Supreme Court.

While the court's judgment stopped short of abolishing the concept of "separate but equal," the case is considered a precedent for the United States Supreme Court decision that did, *Brown v Board of Education*.

Alice and her parents, Pike and Annie Piper, are important players on the stage of racial equality, but far less known than those whose efforts were helped along by mass media. Soon, however, Piper and what she accomplished for Native Americans will be honored in front of the very school she sought to attend, Big Pine High School.

Sage Romero can be credited with lighting this particular flame. During the 2009 celebration of the school's 100th anniversary, the community outreach coordinator for the Big Pine Paiute Tribe dedicated his celebratory dance to Alice Piper. "Of probably 300 people there," said District Superintendent Pamela Jones, "few knew who Alice Piper was." Jones took the idea of honoring Piper to her school board and to the Big Pine Tribal Council. Now, five years later, the details have been worked out and the fundraising campaign is about to launch to make the statue a reality. "This is a heartfelt project," said Jones. "We've been working on it for a long time."

A replica of the finished statue has been created by Matt Glenn of Big Statues in

See PIPER, page 5

PIPER

Continued from front page

Provo, Utah and a page on Kickstarter.com is about to launch to secure backers for the $40,000 project. "The Kickstarter deadline for hitting our $40,000 goal is 30 days from launch," said Jones. "If we don't raise the money by then, we get nothing. No one pays until the campaign is over." The project was submitted to Kickstarter Feb. 12 and should launch by this coming week. The hope is that the campaign will raise the necessary funds in time for an unveiling on June 2, the 90th anniversary of the court's decision.

Romero and Big Pine High School 2013 graduate Alicia Peterson developed a video to promote the effort; Shannon Romero designed the plaque to be set at the base of the statue with a brief summary of the Piper story. Glenn's replica started with a simple pencil sketch. The only problem, according to Jones, was that "she didn't look like a Paiute girl." Robert Guiteriez took the only photo of Piper available, a school group photo, and redid Glenn's sketch with Piper's face. Now, the replica and the finished statue will easily be identified as a member of the Paiute tribe.

Romero, who describes himself as a proactive tribal member promoting the positive aspects of Native American culture, researched Piper for a multi-media presentation with a grant from the California Indian Arts a few years ago. Piper and her accomplishments have remained hidden, "a shadow," as Romero said. "There was no big show," he said. "The family just did it. It was a different way."

Viewed nearly 100 years after the fact, the details of the case are almost unimaginable. According to state law at the time, school districts had the power to establish separate schools for Indian children as well as children of Chinese, Japanese or Mongolian descent. Within districts with these separate schools, those children could not be admitted to the traditional public schools. In addition, the federal government had set up schools specifically for Native American children. California law indicated that in districts with federal schools "these children should not be admitted to the district school," according to the Berkeley Law Scholarship Repository website.

In 1924, the Big Pine district did not maintain a separate school for Native Americans but there was a federal school within district boundaries. On that basis, the district board of directors denied Piper admission. Piper and six other teenagers sued. According to Romero's research, the federal schools taught the students to do "manual labor, to be servants." The schools were indeed separate but in no way equal to the public education available to other citizens. The decision was handed down on June 2, the same day Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act.

The court required that Big Pine admit Piper and her co-plaintiffs on the basis that it was the state's responsibility to provide quality education, despite the existence of a federal alternative. While it wasn't the resounding death knell to separate but equal schools knocked down by the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v Board of Education* decision, it was definitely a significant step in that direction.

For both Jones and Romero, honoring Piper with the statue on the front lawn of the school she sued to get into sends an important message 90 years later. The statue, said Jones, "is a symbol of the struggle to break down barriers." It's also about Native American accomplishments and Big Pine history.

"Some youth have lost their motivation in school," said Romero. "They need to see that we fought to be there."

A Youtube video telling Alice Piper's story can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuAq_LKOzKg.

The Owens Valley Paiutes called themselves nün'wa paya hüp ca'a otüü'mu, the "water ditch coyote children". Coyote placed them in the valley next to the Owens River, where they developed an integral relationship to water. The Paiutes called the Owens River the "water ditch," in part because they irrigated the Owens Valley for centuries before European settlers arrived. Paiutes had a town near Bishop called pitana patü, where they used irrigation ditches to increase the growth of indigenous plants, such as nä'hävita (spike rush).

When snow runoff from the southern Sierra caused creeks to rise in spring, the town head man announced the beginning of the irrigation season. Residents of pitana patü then elected or chose a tuvaiji'u, or irrigator, who was in charge of overseeing the building of a dam out of rocks, brush, sticks, and mud on Bishop Creek. After the damn was finished and the water was pooling behind it, the tuvaiji'u directed the water into the system of ditches to cultivate whatever plants were most needed or desired. On alternate years they would irrigate the fields to the south or north of the dam.

Big Pine is the site the of 279 acre Big Pine Reservation, where the Big Pine Band of Owens Valley Paiute Shoshone Indians were forcibly relocated by the federal goverment 1912. Both Mono and Timbisha Indians reside there, although the Timbisha tribe orginally lived in the Panamint Valley area.

Long-awaited honor unveiled at Big Pine Schools

The AkaMya Culture Group posing with the Alice Piper statue: (l-r) Charlene Redner, Bailee Piper, Hannah Frankson, Aurora Toledo, Uriah Martinez, Joseph Sepsey, Wasuya Martinez, Dyani Talas, Ciara Evening Star, Robert Piper Jr., Jordan Frankson and Sage Romero

Pioneering civil rights activist Alice Piper memorialized with statue on campus that refused to accept her

By Charles James
Register Correspondent

6-7-2014

Alice Piper, a local Native American heroine, was celebrated in Big Pine with a new memorial statue unveiled Monday, June 2 on the lawn outside the Big Pine High School. The full-size bronze statue is the work of Matt Glenn of Big Statues of Provo, Utah.

It was 90 years ago, in 1923, that this 15-year-old from Fish Lake Valley was denied entry to the newly built Big Pine High School on the basis of her race.

A heroine is defined as a woman of distinguished courage or ability, admired for her brave deeds and noble qualities. But in a larger context, Alice Piper is an American heroine whose compelling story changed history, not just locally but on a much larger, grander scale.

The District trustees in the 1920s had agreed to allow Indian students at the school if their parents voted for a measure that would fund the construction of the school. While the measure passed, the board of trustees refused to honor its agreement.

In the early 1920s, California had a law prohibiting Native American children from attending public school if there was a separate government-run Indian school within three miles of a public school. Piper and six other Indian children sued the school district, saying that their 14th Amendment rights (citizenship rights and equal protection of the laws) had been violated.

BUSINESS

HOLT IT RIGHT THERE!

Hi-Country Market has it all in Big Pine

By James

Chris Holt is the owner of the Big Pine Mobil gas station, convenience and hardware store known as Hi-Country Market and Hardware. Locals will also tell you he is a very nice guy and one of the hardest-working people they've ever met.

The convenience and hardware reflects Holt's work ethic. The store was remodeled a few years and expanded. A beer cave was put in—the first in the Owens Valley. Everything was brought up to earthquake standards and solar panels installed on the roof.

Holt wants to have the best place in town for locals and visitors to come to for gas, food, and hardware.

Holt didn't start out with the goal of being a small business owner. When he graduated from high school, he went to an auto mechanic school and once he completed that, he worked at a gas station as a mechanic in Mammoth Lakes. Around 1975 his dad, a local Bishop distributor, came home one day and announced that he had bought a gas station and motel in Big Pine. He asked Chris to manage it. Then his dad bought another store in Wilkerson. So Chris went from being an auto mechanic to managing two stores, a gas station and a motel—the Bristlecone Motel—for ten years until they sold the Wilkerson store.

Chris eventually bought out his dad and has been running things for 35 years. He's the one that wanted to expand the food selection and add in hardware. Although his dad wasn't real supportive of the hardware idea, Chris eventually prevailed and started out by buying a few things. Problem was, shipping was ridiculously expensive, so Holt would drive south out of the county to pick up his order. He still does his share of driving to pick things up. Many local residents have seen Chris offer to get something that he doesn't normally carry, go pick it up in Bishop or wherever he needs to go to get it, and have it at the store for them.

"I listen to what my customers want or need and that it just how it works," says Holt. "If I don't have it; I'll offer to get it for them."

Holt and Manager Jill Montgomery outside the store.

Ernie and Sandy Magana, owners of the Big Pine Resort Cottages and Magnum Builders Construction in Torrance, offered their opinion of the local store: "We are amazed at how many things we have been able to purchase at this one little local but well-stocked store without having to resort to driving to Bishop for hardware!"

In addition to long hours, Holt says it is expensive to run a gas station with constantly changing regulations or upgrades to meet customers' expectations. He is preparing to spend up to $100,000 to completely replace the 15-year-old gas pumps he currently has. He's also looking into either a brand switch on the gas or possibly going with unbranded gasoline to provide more affordable prices to customers. Holt observed that "Gas stations on the reservations don't have to meet state and federal regulations which means they can offer low gas prices, which seems unfair, but that's the way it is and I will do whatever I have to do to be a responsible business owner that respects our environment."

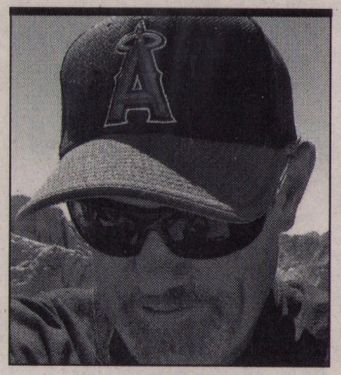
Hi-Country Market and Hardware is located right off the 395 highway in the center of Big Pine. It has convenience foods and sandwiches, sundries and of course, hardware.

A large herd of mule deer roaming the hills above Big Pine. This is a busy area for mule deer this time of year. These deer were grazing on the side of a small, unnamed peak. 150 DEER 4-4-2015 Big Pine

Photos by Craig Jackson

First time hiking in the Sierra

(Hiked on May 5, 2017)



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

"I'm, I'm speechless, I'm in awe," that's what Amir said to me when we happened to cross paths on the north fork Big Pine Canyon trail last Friday.

Come to find out, Amir was from Israel, via Palm Springs, and was on his very first trail on the east side of the Sierra Nevada. Before we began to exchange words he held his arms out to his sides and tipped his head back, gesturing that this spot he was standing on was pure heaven. Talking to this shirtless man on the trail took me back to what was my own very first time on a Sierra trail.

A few minutes before meeting Amir I had a nice conversation with two young guys from Philadelphia who were jogging near Second Falls with no backpacks or water, so I had to ask, "Where are you coming from?" In an east coast accent one of them said, "Oh, just checking things out." Definitely preparation techniques of two newbies to the Eastern Sierra hiking scene. It was a good thing they were walk-jogging back to the trailhead because there were some thunderous clouds appearing over the Palisades.

As a kid growing up in Orange County, many family vacations were spent staying in Mammoth and fishing the lakes in the basin and everywhere on the June Lake Loop. But the exact day I fell in love with hiking in the Sierra Nevada was well move than 20 years ago while standing on the dam at South Lake. I remember standing there wondering what it would be like to explore the wilderness above and let me tell you it's been a wild and adventurous ride.

The roller coaster of fun continued last week as I headed back out to Big Pine Canyon to see if I could comfortably hike to the Lon Chaney cabin, 3 miles each way. It was Cinco de Mayo and to celebrate the occasion I did something I've only done a handful of times while hiking. I brought a Modelo cervesa, planning on cracking it open next to the creek on the porch of the cabin.

Built in 1929-30 by the actor famous for roles in "The Phantom of the Opera" and "Hunchback of Notre Dame," the avid fisherman utilized native granite and lodgepole pines to construct his mountain home next to the creek. Unfortunately for Mr. Chaney, he died in 1930 at the age of 47 of lung cancer and never had a chance to enjoy his El Dorado. Today it sits boarded up as a wilderness ranger cabin.

Snow that's fallen from the roof of the Lon Chaney cabin piles up in north fork Big Pine Canyon.

Photo by Craig Jacks

The weather was perfect at 10 a.m. when I started hiking up the north fork of the Big Pine trail from the hiker parking area near the pack station. I prefer starting here rather than near Glacier Lodge because the view up south fork Big Pine is spectacular and a perfect beginning to a hike. The snow had melted quite a bit since the last time I was there five weeks ago while the creek grew and became more raucous over the same period of time.

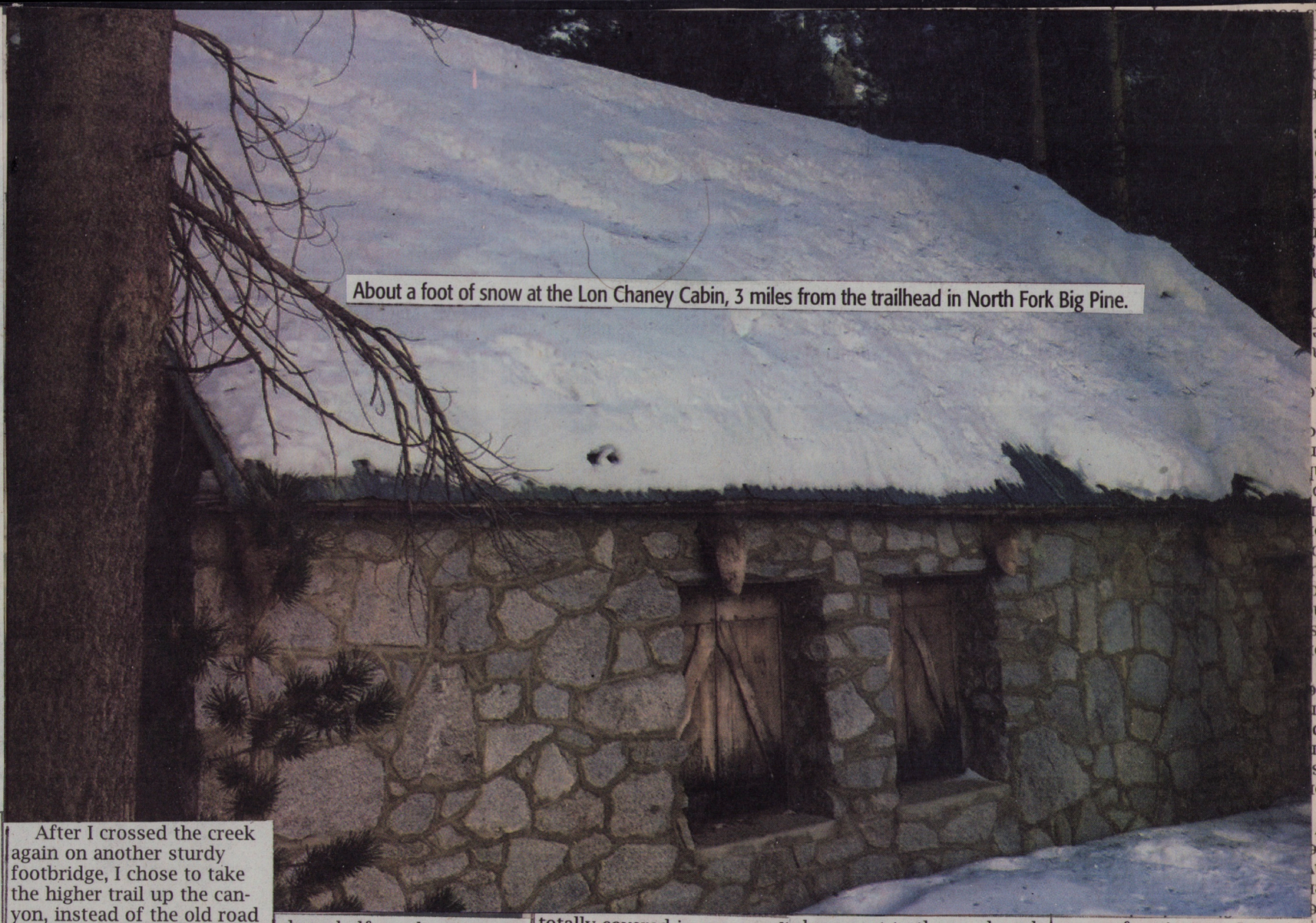
It took an hour or so of leisurely hiking to reach the top of Second Falls and a raging north fork Big Pine Creek. Snow was in large piles on the trail but that didn't impede any progress on this familiar path. Three miles from the trailhead I arrived at the Lon Chaney cabin, cracked open my cervesa and spent an hour just hanging out on a large rock next to the creek. With a spring in my step I left this extremely peaceful spot behind, already planning another hike in a month or so and getting farther up the trai

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relo cated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail. com.)

During spring, summer, fall and sometimes winter, it is possible to drive to the trailhead, west of Big Pine. The low elevation at the start (7,800 feet) allows hikers the chance to reach the High Country, even when covered in snow, and that's exactly what I encountered last month. When I departed from home in Bishop and headed southbound on U.S. Highway 395 towards Big Pine, I wasn't quite sure where I would end up hiking, until I turned right on Crocker Avenue. Soon enough, I was cruising up Glacier Lodge Road, transitioning from dry arid desert terrain to snow-covered slopes and headed directly to North Fork Big Pine trail.

The pleasant drive continued over a partially snow-covered road, before ending at the trailhead near the old Glacier Lodge Resort. As I expected, there were no other vehicles anywhere to be seen, just a quiet winter scene and a creek covered in ice. It took a few minutes to prepare myself for what was ahead; putting on gloves, a beanie and two jackets, as well as gaiters and a scarf. With snow covering every inch of dirt, and the temperature near freezing, the aforementioned attire would be a necessity the entire day.

At the beginning, the trail took me past some boarded-up vacation homes next to Big Pine Creek, then on a footbridge over ice-encrusted Second Falls before I made a right turn on the North Fork Trail. A half dozen short switchbacks later and I popped out of the forest and onto the old road that led to a campground more than 35 years ago.



About a foot of snow at the Lon Chaney Cabin, 3 miles from the trailhead in North Fork Big Pine.

After I crossed the creek again on another sturdy footbridge, I chose to take the higher trail up the canyon, instead of the old road next to the North Fork Big Pine Creek. I figured it would have more prior boot traffic than the lower trail, but alas, I was wrong. For the next mile it was a 10-inch posthole adventure, until I reached the junction with the Baker Creek Trail, along with the lower trail that I should have taken.

From this point on, the 6- to 10-inch snow depth on the trail had been squashed down half way by previous hikers, making it very pleasant to walk in without snowshoes. Although, at this point I did put on my micro-spikes to help make the snow hiking a little safer and more enjoyable. Plus, I really like wearing them.

The beauty of this part of the Sierra Nevada in summertime is beyond spectacular, but when it's totally covered in snow and frigid cold, it's something more than special. Up the trail now, I entered the forest through some leave-less Aspen trees, losing the sunshine momentarily, but that was OK. It was a lot of fun stomping in the snow all the way to the Lon Chaney cabin, 2.8 miles from the trailhead.

It was so pleasant hanging out at this peaceful place, next to the creek and deep in the woods. Despite the fact, the cold on my nose and mouth was starting to get a little uncomfortable. I ate some cheese, crackers and grapes to stop my stomach from growling, and it worked.

It took more than two and a half hours to hike less than 3 miles back to my car, thanks to my leisurely pace and periodic stops for pictures. It was a great winter day in the Eastern Sierra, one that won't be forgotten anytime soon.

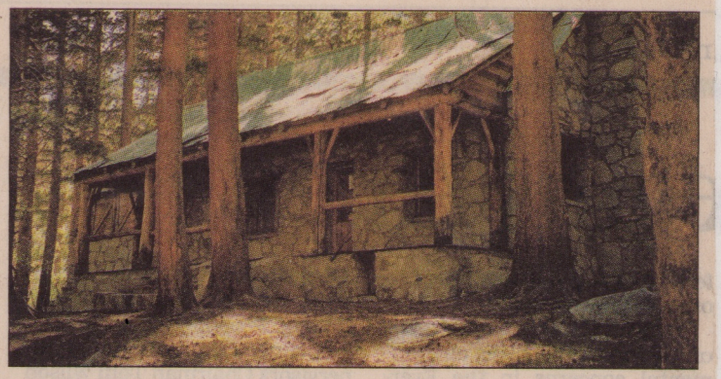
(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

Actor Lon Chaney's Phantom of the Forest

6-7-2003

The silent film star's stone cabin remains tucked away in the remote eastern Sierra.

By LESLIE CARLSON
Times Staff Writer



HISTORIC BUILDING: *Structure is the only cabin designed by Paul Revere Williams, according to his granddaughter.*

You see it first as a greenish corrugated tin roof hidden in a grove of solid red lodgepole pines. By then, you have hiked three miles, mostly uphill, and are 1,700 feet higher than your starting point 10 miles west of Big Pine in the John Muir Wilderness in the eastern Sierra.

A left fork off the main trail places you below a set of stone steps and a massive stone structure. The idea of such a trek is to get away from civilization. So if you aren't expecting what's coming, the 1,288-square-foot granite field stone structure suddenly materializing is a bizarre discovery that, at first glance, can arouse a naturalist's uneasiness at encountering anything man-made in a wilderness setting.

But the building is no ordinary intrusion. Nor does the U.S. Forest Service sign identifying it as a wilderness ranger cabin begin to explain it. Large locks secure the doors and wooden shutters bar the windows — all contributing to an air of mystery that seems in keeping with the image of its original owner, Lon Chaney Sr. The actor who starred in "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" and "The Phantom of the Opera," Chaney was referred to as "the man of a thousand faces," and for millions of moviegoers in the 1910s and 1920s was the personification of humanity within horror.

Chaney had the stone cabin built for $12,000 in 1929-30. It was designed by Los Angeles architect Paul Revere Williams, the first African American granted a fellowship in the American Institute of Architects. The Saks Fifth Avenue Building in Beverly Hills is an example of one of his public buildings. But Williams is best known for designing private homes, about 2,000 of them, for film celebrities, politicians and other famous people. According to Williams' granddaughter, Karen Hudson, the Chaney cabin was the only mountain cabin he designed.

Surrounded by steep canyon walls and located amid lodgepole pines in the Inyo National Forest, the cabin faces a creek. Wide stone steps lead up to the one-story rectangular building, its walls 2 feet thick and made of large granite rocks cemented together. There is a gable roof, now covered by corrugated metal, and overhanging 8-inch-thick lodgepole beams.

The interior is divided into one large room and a kitchen separated by a plank wall. There is tongue-in-groove pine flooring, and a granite fireplace in the main room. When Chaney owned the cabin, there was a mounted deer head above the fireplace and a bear rug on the floor. A kerosene lamp on a pulley provided light for the living area and the kitchen.

"Tonight I start out for the High Sierra. No shaving, no makeup, no interviews for four long, lazy weeks. We take a stove along and the wife cooks the fish I catch. We sleep under the pines and I try to climb high enough to reach the snows. Camping's the biggest kick in life for me," Chaney told a writer in 1928.

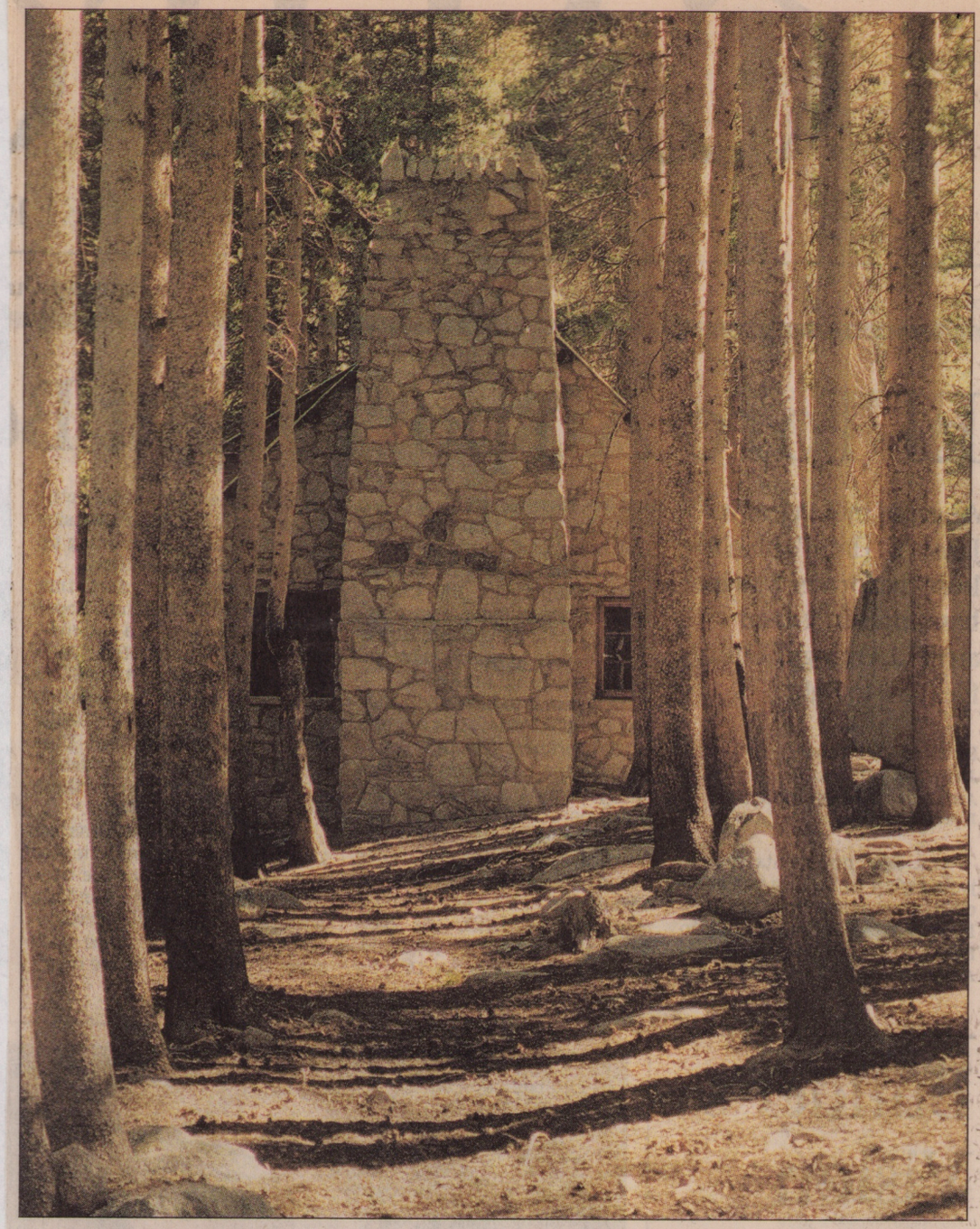
It was no accident that Chaney located the cabin near the Cienega Mirth section of Big Pine Creek, where it curves gently and flattens out. It is one of the best trout fishing spots in the area. Chaney was an ardent fly fisherman and early practitioner of catch and release who had escaped to the area for many years. He camped with his family near the site of the cabin long before he had it built. The glaciated canyon closely resembles the Colorado countryside around Pike's Peak, where Chaney, as a teenager, led tour groups up the mountain by burro. The fact that there was no road up Big Pine Canyon to the cabin for the last 1½ miles must have appealed to Chaney. He hired pack trains to bring in supplies.

Chaney was to enjoy his cabin for only a few months before his death at age 47. His last trip to the cabin was with his wife, Hazel, in late July 1930. By that time, according to Michael F. Blake's book, "The Man Behind the Thousand Faces," Chaney's bronchial cancer was very advanced. His weakened state, combined with the cabin's 9,200-foot elevation, made it impossible for him to fish. Continuing hemorrhages forced him to return to Los Angeles, where he died Aug. 26.

The Chaney cabin was built under a government special use permit that allowed Chaney to own the structure while leasing the half-acre site from the federal government. The cabin was sold in 1932, and again in 1955. It reverted to the government in 1980 when the permit expired.

The Forest Service considered destroying the cabin to comply with the 1964 Wilderness

OVER



Photographs by LESLIE CARLSON *Los Angeles Times*

MOUNTAIN RETREAT: *Cabin's stone chimney is visible through lodgepole pines.*

Act, which calls for the restoration of natural conditions in wilderness areas. But the agency changed its mind when it became clear that the amount of dynamite required to demolish the massive stone structure would cause major damage to the surrounding trees.

Ultimately, the Forest Service decided that the cabin's historic value justified its preservation. In 1982, the agency proposed placing the cabin on the Register of Historic Places, but the application process was never completed. The cabin remains on the list of candidates for official designation.

Today, the cabin remains closed to the public, and is seldom used by the Forest Service for shelter or rescue operations. According to Linda Reynolds, a Forest Service historian, there is no money budgeted to maintain the cabin's interior, even though volunteer groups periodically monitor and maintain its exterior. Forest rangers are concerned that the cabin's roof might collapse under a heavy snow, despite the huge beams.

Reynolds believes that public intervention may be the only way to ensure the cabin's survival.

"I think we should have higher visibility — most people don't know that there are many archeological and historical sites in the Inyo [National Forest] and they should. Get people involved and maybe we can save some more of them."

It probably didn't help that the 1957 film "Man of a Thousand Faces" placed the cabin by a lake and showed Model Ts driving up to the door of a place that is still accessible only by a mountain trail.

HISTORY BITS

History, it has been wisely said, is in the eyes of the beholder. In 1991, Junior high school students were invited to participate in the Inyo County speech contest, the topic: "A Piece of Inyo County History." Through the courtesy of Rebecca Neil, Administrative Secretary of the Inyo County Office of Education, we are able to present some bits of history in the eyes of youth, from two of the nine finalists.

Lon Chaney

How many of you know of the movies filmed in the valley? So many movies came from our Owens Valley it is hard to count them all. All films, obviously, have many actors in them. One actor, that many of you probably have never heard of was Lon Chaney. Lon Chaney built a cabin in the High Sierra above Big Pine.

Lon Chaney was known as the Man of a Thousand Faces. He was such a good actor because he could do what no other actor could do. That was, he could bring characters to life. He was such a master at this that all of the characters he portrayed seemed real; from a legless man to the Hunchback of Notre Dame to a dear, sweet, old lady. He did not have a make-up artist to put make-up on him. He would do it himself. He had a famous satchel that held his make-up. The satchel was so famous because the make-up departments of the major studios all admired it.

Lon Chaney's cabin is located at 9,000 feet above sea level next to the North Fork of Big Pine Creek. The cabin was built in 1929. Paul Revere Williams was the architect Lon Chaney picked to design his cabin. Paul Revere Williams was the first black architect to be granted a fellowship in the American Institute of Architects. He designed many buildings, Saks Fifth Avenue in Beverly Hills, and many film actors homes. Although Williams designed many homes, Lon Chaney's cabin was the first and only mountain cabin he ever designed.

The cabin is situated with a gallery porch facing southward. There are three sets of steps leading up to this porch. There is one on the west side, one on the east side, and one leading up the middle to a plank door. This main door is built into large granite stones set in mortar. On the wall facing onto the porch there are three windows. The main door leads into the living quarters. On the eastern wall of the living area there is a grand granite fireplace. The ceiling above is open showing the local Lodgepole pine rafters. On the western end of the living area there is a wall separating the living area from the kitchen. The kitchen has linoleum flooring and is plumbed from a well on the northern side of the cabin. The western wall of the kitchen is granite with a door leading out onto a side porch. This porch contains shower rooms plumbed by the well on the north side of the cabin. There have been two small buildings added to the property since the cabin was built. One was the shed that is located north west of the cabin. The outhouse located west of the cabin was the other building.

Many hikers have walked by the cabin. It is located above the third falls of Big Pine Creek. The North Fork hiking trail passes behind the cabin but not many people know the historical value of this cabin. Most people just stop to rest on the gallery porch. After

Chaney's death in 1930, the cabin was sold to Ruluff and Bessie Slimmer in 1932. When Ruluff died in 1954, it was sold to Charles and Jane Strickland and Lawrence and Mary Fuller. The Forest Service acquired the cabin from the Stricklands and the Fullers to preserve it after legislation declared that no building shall be above an elevation of 9,000 feet. Because of its historical significance, the Lon Chaney cabin stands on its original site above the proclamation line.

-by Charles Peterson

The Lon Chaney cabin on Big Pine Creek. Photo courtesy of Mike Daly, Ridgecrest, CA

Massive snowfalls are rare in the Owens Valley, but back in 1916 Big Pine got hit with 3-4 feet. Above, now-vintage autos slide past what looks like the original Carroll's Market. Photo courtesy Eastern California Museum, County of Inyo

Big Pine Calif. H.W.M. 780

Added by Kiki Newton-Moore

Harry Warner Mendenhall

Birth	31 Aug 1883 Blue Earth County, Minnesota, USA
Death	23 Jul 1952 (aged 68) Inyo County, California, USA
Burial	Big Pine Cemetery Big Pine, Inyo County, California, USA
Plot	section East 1, Row F, grave 6 or 7

Harry came to Big Pine with his father who was a miner. He photographed many historic places and aspects people of Inyo County, and started his Sporting Goods/Hardware store, which was carried on after he passed away by his wife, Edith (Edie).

Family Members

Parents

William Wesley Mendenhall

1859–1938

Spouse

-

Edith May *Calkins* Mendenhall

Photo added by sandsoftime

Added by Barbara B. Added by Kiki Newton-Moore

Advertisement

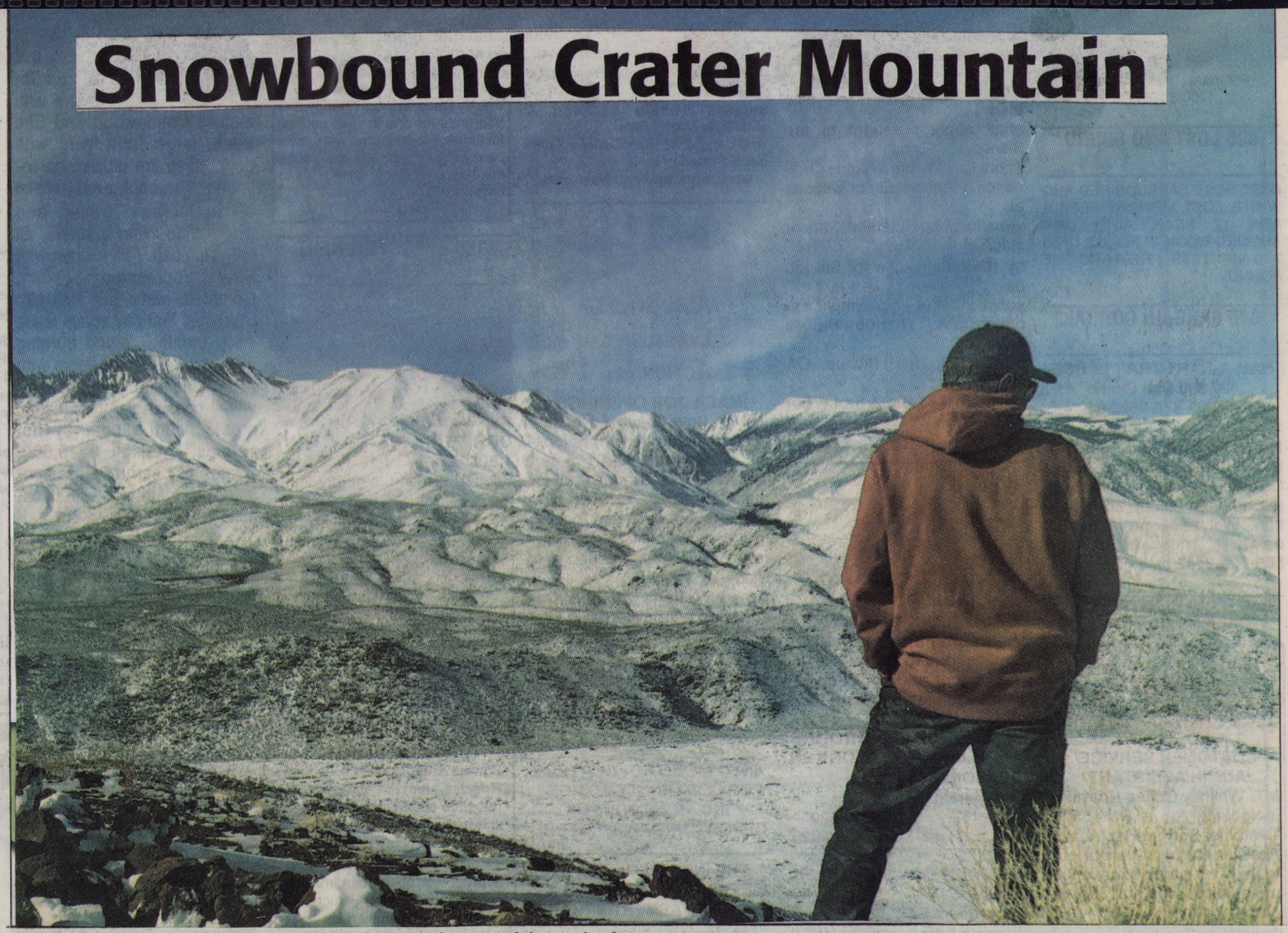
Edith May "Edie" *Calkins* Mendenhall

Birth	30 Oct 1895 Tempe, Maricopa County, Arizona, USA
Death	15 Jan 1976 (aged 80) Bishop, Inyo County, California, USA
Burial	Big Pine Cemetery Big Pine, Inyo County, California, USA
Memorial ID	179015937 · View Source

A wonderful contributor to the community of Big Pine & beloved wife of photographer Harry W Mendenhall. Born in Arizona, Alice came to Big Pine as a teacher in the Grammar School, lodging with George W. Hall and his family. She was one of five teachers/administrators for the Big Pine Schools living with the Halls.

A lovely park in Big Pine is named in her memory - Mendenhall Park.

Snowbound Crater Mountain



Standing on the summit of Crater Mountain, I was in awe of the majestic scene.

JAN. 2020

Photo by Sarah Daou

Eastern Sierra did not receive much snowfall whatsoever. Matter of fact, if I remember correctly, there was only one day when snow actually fell during the entire month and that was on Jan. 16. Coincidentally, Sarah and I had already planned to hike on Jan. 17, which we kept scheduled despite the fresh snow covering the Owens Valley. The forecast for the day of our hike was to be clear, crystal blue skies and no chance of precipitation. We were very excited, to say the least.

I picked her up promptly at 8:36 a.m. and headed southbound on U.S. Highway 395 for the 15-minute drive down to Big Pine. After a quick stop for supplies, we then drove up Glacier Lodge Road for less than 5 miles and turned left on McMurry Meadows Road, where we immediately parked and got ready for our adventure. It was literally a winter wonderland out there, with every piece of land as far as the eye can see covered in snow. Thankfully for us, the fluffy white powder was only a couple of inches deep and fun to hike in. It didn't take long for us to get going, as we quickly started the four mile walk on McMurry Meadows Road to the west ridge of Crater Mountain. I can't remember ever having that much fun walking up a snow-covered road, aided by the amazing personality and sense of humor of my hiking partner.

In less than two hours, the two of us left the comforts of the road and began heading straight up to the summit of Crater Mountain. Amidst the laughing, singing and entertaining conversation, we made our way through the jagged lava rocks and medium-size boulders, managing to find a hint of a trail less than a mile from the top. At this point, the snow cover doubled in size from the beginning, totaling approximately six inches in depth, but thanks to the local mule deer population, we had a beautiful trail to follow. Before reaching the summit, it was necessary to take a short break for a snack, with a world-class view of a volcanic crater below and the snow-capped Sierra Nevada behind.It was truly spectacular!

Once Sarah finished her usual intake of hard boiled eggs, fennel or seaweed chips and chocolate, we left this perfect spot and aimed straight for the summit. Once we made it to the top we were genuinely mesmerized; the 360 degree view included a snow-blanketed Owens Valley, as well as the White and Inyo Mountains to the east and of course, the Range of Light. We were actually speechless for a moment, a scene I will never forget.

As beautiful as it was up there, it was damn cold! Without any trees or large boulders to protect us from the wind, we struggled to keep our composure. Unfortunately, we didn't stay as long as we had planned, but that didn't keep us from having a good time. The clear blue sky and abundant sunshine provided the exact backdrop we needed for the day, and we took full advantage of it.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

two peaks near Big Pine

Recently I was out shed hunting (looking for deer antlers) west of Big Pine in the hills below the Sierra Nevada.

Off-trail hiking and route-finding in the area is pretty straightforward due to the lack of big trees and also the rolling hills. Arc Road is a well-graded dirt road that starts near Glacier Lodge Road and continues up into the hills through the Boulder Patch, past Big Pine Spring and eventually concludes at what is called Glacier View. This road is usually traversed in a four-wheel drive vehicle but I find it more fun to get out of the car and hike.

On this particular day I started near Baker Creek and wandered up the steep slopes of Piper Peak, down through the Boulder Patch and back to Warren Bench, near Baker Creek. Before returning to my car, I decided to hike to the top of the small peak north of Baker Creek at the mouth of the canyon. From the summit, I could see about 30 young people climbing another small peak across Baker Creek to the south. Intrigued by the sight of all these people huffing and puffing to the top of this peak, I thought I would see what all the fuss is about and came back a week later to climb this peak.

To get to the start of the hike from Big Pine, head west on Crocker Street for 1.6 miles and turn right onto paved Sugarloaf Road. After 0.6 miles turn right onto Arc Road, a well-graded dirt road. Drive a short distance, cross over a creek and park in the dirt lot on the left-hand side next to the creek.

Before starting the hike, be sure to check out the purple lupine blooming in abundance near the creek as well as other colorful flowers like Indian Paintbrush. The first peak I headed to is clearly visible from the start as it sits directly to the west of the Sierra Adventure Center with a somewhat dramatic east face.

Begin hiking towards the Sierra alongside a dry creek bed, just north of the Adventure Center. In this area, notice the old rock house, cement water-diversion channels and the corrals that used to be here many years ago when this facility was a working ranch. Only ghosts remain now, as well as some old concrete foundations and old junk.

Once beyond the Adventure Center on the left, continue straight ahead into open terrain and then start up the steep north slope of Peak No. 1. The views begin to open up and after a quarter-mile gain the west ridge. From here, I continued to the summit (no register or peak name) and enjoyed a great view down to Big Pine, the Owens Valley and the White Mountains.

Due west from the summit of Peak No. 1, the higher Peak No. 2 (no registers on these peaks, therefore no known names) is clearly visible just beyond the saddle between the two peaks.

This is a busy area for mule deer this time of year, evident by the tracks and scat scattered about. Drop down from the first peak to the saddle and start the short, steep scramble to Peak No. 2's summit ridge. I followed the ridge a few hundred feet to the obvious high point and was rewarded with a sweet 360-degree view from the Sierra Crest to the west and Big Pine to the east. Break out the lunch here and enjoy the cool breeze while searching for deer, eagles and other wildlife.

When lunch is finished and energy levels restored, you can either return the same way you came or venture cross-country down the north slope to the dry creek bed below. I opted for the latter and was pleasantly surprised and happy for my decision. On my way down I came across a herd of approximately 150 deer as they grazed on the side of Peak No. 2. Not to my surprise, they spotted me above them and started slowly moving in unison away from me over a small ridge. I proceeded to slowly follow them and then sat on a rock 100 feet away and watched them mingle amongst themselves for about an hour. I am a true admirer of mule deer and enjoy photographing the herds, but mostly the big bucks bossing around the smaller bucks. Nature at its finest and I can't get enough of it.

I've done this hike now three times in the last month and have seen the same herd all three times I've been up there, but it's getting warmer and they'll probably be heading up to the high country soon. From here, it's easy to get back to the trailhead but be sure to wander around the area before returning to your car.

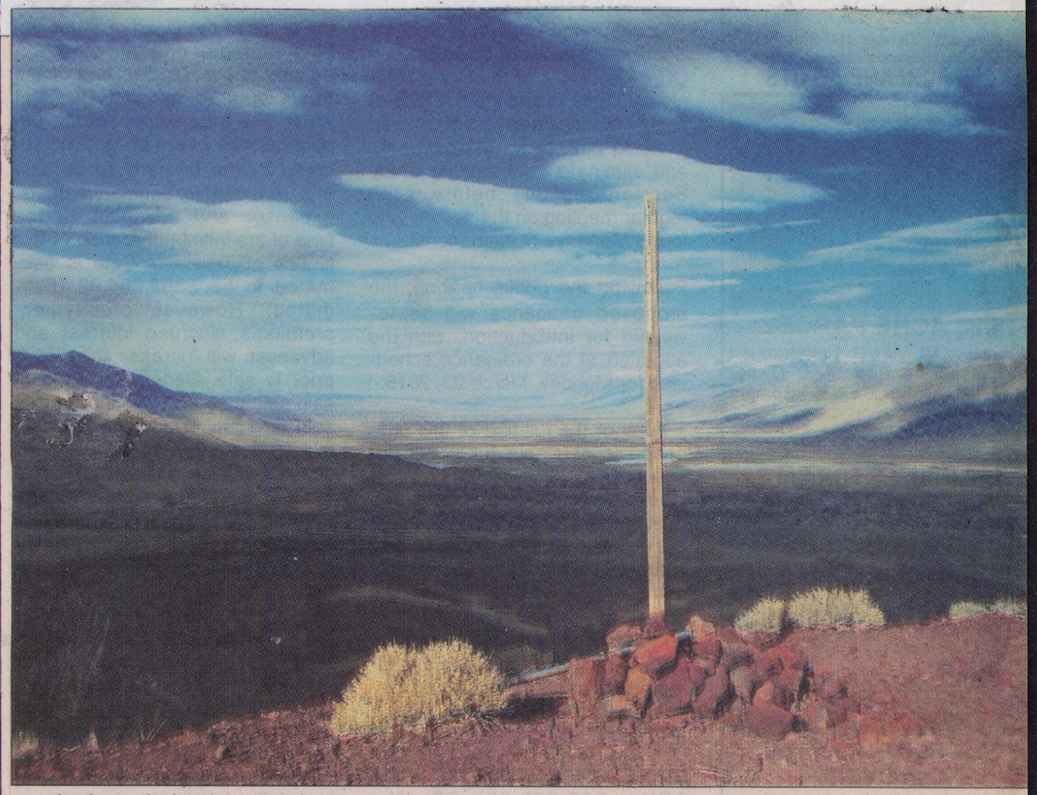
At a glance:

- Climb two peaks in a half day
- Definite wildlife sighting possibilities
- Warmer at lower elevations, breezy at summits
- Great view of the massive peaks of the Sierra Nevada
- Three to five miles round trip with just a few hundred foot gain

The first peak is a short walk from the trailhead overlooking Big Pine and the Owens Valley.

Sweet view of the Sierra Nevada from Peak No. 2, which is higher than Peak No. 1.

Crater Mountain



North view of Big Pine and the Owens Valley from the summit of Crater Mountain.

(Hiked on Dec. 31) 2015

Crater Mountain can easily be seen by anyone driving along U.S. Highway 395 just south of Big Pine. It is the most prominent feature in the Big Pine Volcanic Field just south of town. The dark mountain, which rises 2,000 feet above the floor of the Owens Valley, is composed of an 800-foot volcanic cone that erupted atop a 1,200-foot granite hill about 290,000 years ago. Basalt flows from the vent covered the underlying granite hill, making the volcanic vent appear larger.

With its dark color and monster-like jagged spires of cooled lava, and with little vegetation on the young mountain, it may look foreboding at first glance. Yet it is Crater Mountain's rugged simplicity that makes it charming. The dark ominous rocks are actually light as a feather and full of tiny holes. These holes are the result of air mixing with exploding lava, and subsequent quick cooling. And, though plant diversity is low, the area is popular with Tule elk, chukar and many species of lizards. Also, it is critical winter habitat for the Goodale mule deer herd.

A herd of Tule elk was transplanted into the Owens Valley in the 1950s from California's central valley to protect the species. The elk have done quite well in their new home. The herd, which includes bulls with expansive antlers and plenty of cows and calves, can be found on both sides of U.S. Highway 395 south of Big Pine and down to Lone Pine. "Wildlife Viewing" signs near two of the herd's most favorite places to graze and bed down point motorists to pull-outs, to take pictures and a safe place to view the beautiful and majestic elk. The best time to see the elk are in the mornings and at sunset from spring through fall. The herd normally stays on or close to irrigated alfalfa fields to take advantage of the ample water and feed.

Crater Mountain was used by the Big Pine Paiutes for seed collecting, seed processing and hunting. Bordering the Sierra and overlooking the Owens Valley, the view from the top of Crater Mountain is outstanding and shouldn't be missed. It is easy to avoid the rocky outcropping, making the technical aspect of the dogged hike up Crater Mountain relatively simple.

To reach the starting point of the hike from Bishop, head south on U.S. Highway 395 for 15 miles and turn right on Crocker Avenue, next to the Mobil gas station. Go about three miles and turn left onto dirt McMurry Meadows Road. Look for the green street sign on the north side of the road.

If you're planning for a full day of hiking like I did, park here at a dirt turnout and hike the two-plus miles on the road to Crater Mountain's west ridge. If you're driving a four-wheel drive vehicle and/or are looking for a shorter day, drive the two-plus miles to the west ridge of Crater Mountain and park off the side of the road. ust remember, when you make the left onto McMurry Meadows Road from Glacier Lodge Road (Crocker Avenue), make an immediate left. The road to the right goes up into the hills below Birch Mountain.

If hiking or driving to the starting point, look for the obvious west ridge of Crater Mountain and begin hiking uphill. Traverse an open area full of lava rock and sparse vegetation up towards the high point. The higher you climb, the more the views open up.

The climb becomes steeper as you go higher up. Just below the summit to the west, notice the large crater to which the mountain was named after and the spectacular view of Birch Mountain and the rest of the Sierra Nevada. Be sure to wander about the crater just to get the sensation of being in an actual volcano crater.

From the crater, hike up and around to the south side of the summit and make your way up to the summit ridge. Walk around to the east for magnificent views of the White Mountains, Klondike Lake, Lake Tinnemaha, as well as Big Pine below. Hike over to the north, and highest, point where there's a large rock cairn but no register (last time I was there). The 360-degree views from the summit are absolutely stunning and definitely well-worth the effort. Have lunch at the top, enjoy the incredible scenery and cool breeze, and then return to your car.

At a glance:

- 6.5 miles round trip hike from Glacier Lodge Rd.; three miles round trip hike from west ridge.
- Breathtaking views from summit.
- Hiking in volcanic field.
- Possible wildlife sighting.
- 6,100-foot elevation at summit, bring warm clothes during colder months.

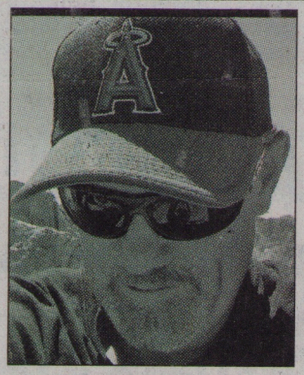
Camp Mountain rises sharply from the valley floor, a few short miles east of the Sierra Nevada.

Photo by Craig Jackson

this half-day trip.

There's no distinct path to Camp Mountain and beyond, its basically walking in a straight line across a sage-covered landscape. I started out walking due west across what looked to be an old reservoir system, with disintegrating concrete waterways and dugout pools for water storage. Within a few minutes I was passing the school to the south and starting out into the wide open wilderness.

From this point, as far as the eyes can see, are rolling hills from north to south with miles and miles to explore. It's a great place for a wandering adventure! Less than a mile from my car I started up the steep north



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

slope of Camp Mountain. Along the way, I advertently came upon a nice herd of mule deer, trying my best not to disturb their daily routine. As the herd came up and over Camp Mountain's north ridge, and back down the other side, I continued the short climb to the top. It's not a tough climb whatsoever, but the steepness and the cold air literally took my breath away.

The wind started blowing a lot harder as I made my way to the summit, but it didn't bother me because the fun I was having outweighed the low temperature. The view of Big Pine from the summit is outstanding, as well as Westgard Pass to the east and the massive White Mountain Range. It didn't take long to stroll the small summit ridge before boot-skiing down the west side to a perfectly placed saddle, 300 feet below.

It was very enjoyable making the short climb to Camp Mountain, but the real fun was about to begin. Approximately three football fields to the west is a higher peak with a steep rock climb to its summit ridge. The wind really kicked into gear at this point just as I started the half mile walk to the summit.

The unnamed summit I was now standing on was a couple hundred feet higher than Camp Mountain, with a better view of the Sierra Nevada. I hung out here for a while, saw another small herd of mule deer below, as well as a crow harassing a young bald eagle above, then started steeply down the north slope, towards the dry creek bed below.

The final hour of the hike was pure pleasure, as I slowly followed another herd of mule deer down to the bottom of the canyon. As they went back up another peak, I continued down the canyon, marveling at their agility and natural expertise in this harsh environment. They are truly amazing animals.

Four hours after starting out I was back at my car, happy to be finished with my hike and looking forward to the next one.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

Sierra Sojourns

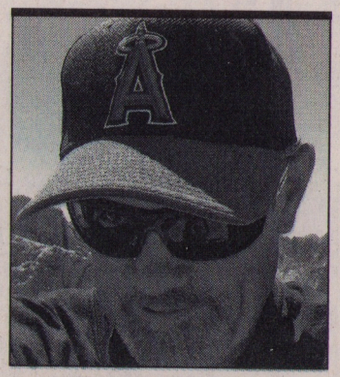
Two years and a ton of snow

(Hiked on April 16, 2017)

Two years ago last week it was entirely possible for a moderate hiker like myself to hike to Long Lake on the Bishop Pass trail and also Second Lake from the Big Pine Canyon trail. Snowpack was completely insignificant in the Sierra Nevada back in 2015 with trails up to Kearsarge Pass and Piute Pass easily discernible early in the hiking season. I guess I've been spoiled the last few years with the drought and everything, being able to capitalize on six months of high country hiking compared to probably four months this year.

I wonder if there's anybody else out there who is a little tired of talking and hearing about snow in the Sierra, bring on summer. I know it's a great thing for the planet and its inhabitants but I'm ready to get way out there. Enough of these short jaunts in the foothills, or near the canals, although these are good hikes also.

One of these foothill hikes I've done about a dozen times now, and it seems like I have a completely different experience each and every time, is a couple of miles west of Big Pine near Baker Creek. Also very close to Copper Top Barbecue and its sampler platter, which will be my last stop on the way home to Bishop later. This short hike starts off of Sugarloaf Road and Arc Road, next to a diversion of Big Pine Creek.



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

I parked in a very familiar spot below the Sierra Adventure Center next to a dry creek bed, well normally a dry creek bed. On this day in mid April of 2017 I, for the very first time, witnessed actual water flowing graciously down this almost-always arid landscape. This hike is best when the weather is cool, I haven't tried it in the summer but I'm sure it would be smokin' hot.

I was truly mesmerized while walking next to this temporary creek, then I realized it wasn't going to be easy to cross. The first objective of the day was clearly in sight so I took a few steps back and ran at full speed, jumping as far as I could and landing on the other side of the creek in a cloud of dust. I stood up, wiped myself off and headed straight for the peak that stands tall directly behind the Sierra Adventure Center.

It's only about a half mile to the summit but it makes up for the short distance by the steepness of the climb. There's a partially unrecognizable trail that circles around to the west side but the fastest way up is straight up the north slope. In a few minutes I was at the top and noticed something I hadn't seen previously – a summit register and a large wooden sign that read "Camp Mountain." The sign had fallen over so I propped it back up but the wind will probably knock it back down.

The next objective led me down the west side of Camp Mountain and onto a small saddle before climbing another 300 feet to a higher summit due west. There's no register or summit sign but the view is much better here with Birch Mountain appearing humongous to the south.

After a few lazy minutes staring at the mountains I bolted down the north side towards the dry creek but before I could get there I happened upon a nice herd of two dozen deer grazing on the slope below me.

With a growling stomach and a need for meat that is barbecued, I darted downhill in a straight line and was back at my car in no time at all. By the way, the raging creek that I jumped across three hours earlier was now a muddy canal drying in the afternoon sun.

Camp Mountain stands behind the Sierra Adventure Center in Big Pine.

Photo by Craig Jacks

(Craig Jackson is a Bisho resident and avid hiker/ backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

BIG PINE - CRATER MOUNTAIN

SELF - GUIDED

4WD LOOP TRIP

BIG PINE

BIG PINE CREEK

GLACIER LODGE ROAD

2.0

LITTLE PINE CREEK

HYDRAULIC PIT

.3

.8

OLD CHINESE MINING CAMPS

1.0

McMURRAY MEADOW ROAD

2.9

DUMP

CEMETARY

SLAQUE RANCH SITE

BIRCH LAKE TRAILHEAD

.6

.7

.7

CRATER MOUNTAIN

EXTINCT VOLCANO

LAVA TUBES

PARK HERE TO HIKE TO LAVA TUBES

LAVA TUBES ARE ABOUT 2 O'CLOCK FROM PARKING AREA AND CAN BE FOUND BY OBSEVING WHITE SHIRT WRAPPED ROCK. LOOK FOR MORE SMALLER TUBES AND ONE LARGER ONE FURTHER UP THE MOUNTAINSIDE IN THE SAME DIRECTION

4.4

McMURRAY MEADOW

POLE LINE ROAD

1.9

BIRCH CREEK

395

FISH SPRINGS ROAD

FISH SPRINGS HATCHERY

↓ MINES, PROSPECTS

O GOLD PANNING AREA

N

BUILDINGS

TRAILS

.8

COMMITTEE MINES

.4

GATE

.2

BUNKER

.1

STAMP MILL

1.3

TULE ELK VIEWING

1.4

1.6

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AN PERLITE MINE T

TINNEMAHA CAMPGROUND

TINNEMANA ROAD

LAHA CREEK

2.5

POVERTY HILLS

Big Pine Chamber of Commerce P.O.Box 23 Big Pine, CA 93513 619-938-2114

WIN CARTER, BETTY CARTER & DWAYNE ROSSI

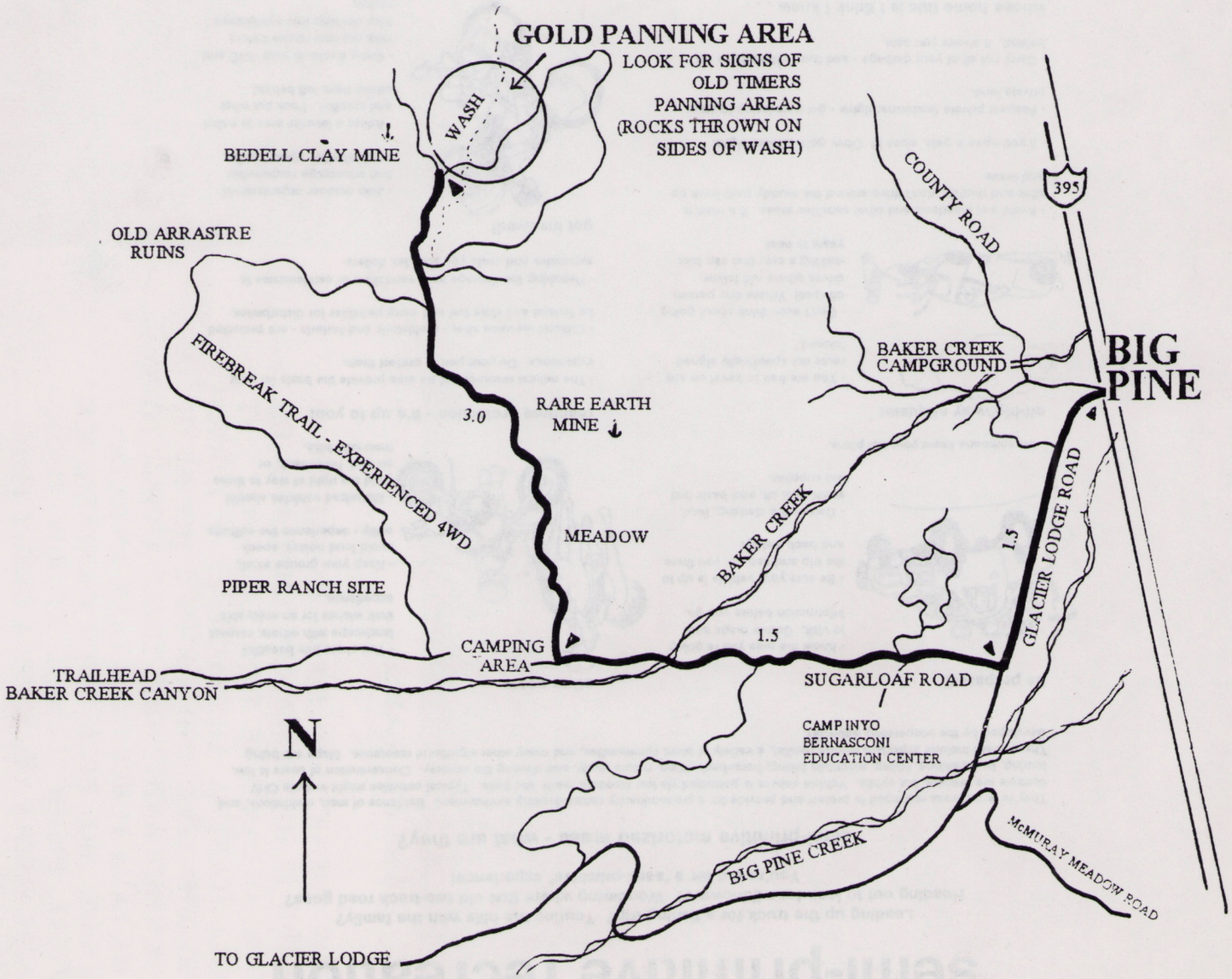
Hydraulic Pit

Water taken from Birch Lake in 1909 elevation 10,800'. Three miles of Ditch & Flume and one thousand feet of 18 inch pipe narrowing to 8 inchs with a 4 inch nozzle. Waste went down a wash toward Crater Mt. Eight man crew found a 40 dollar nugget in 1909. Prior claim on Birch Lake in 1907! Hydraulic mining banned in 1884?

GOLD PANNING IN THE BIG PINE AREA

At the turn of the century, settlers and farmers in the Owen's Valley supplemented their income by panning gold during the winter months, and could average about $2 a day at a time when gold was $18 an ounce. Water used during the summer for crops was diverted from Onion Creek into hand dug ditches and carried about 5 miles from the west of the gold property to the old Rossi Ranch north of Big Pine. It was then called Rossi Creek. A portion of the creek was divided at the old arrastre (shown on map) and was brought down to the gold property. In a wet year, there was enough water in the canyon to pan gold in the early spring. In dry years, water was hauled to the site or upgraded material was hauled to Baker Creek to pan.

Gold in this area is mostly very fine, but match-head-sized nuggets can be found.



Win Carter, Betty Carter + Dwayn Rossi

Big Pine Chamber of Commerce P.O.Box 23 Big Pine, CA 93513 619-938-2114

PLACER CLAIM

LOCATOR:
Please give mailing address below.

Name.....

Address.....

City & State.....

DO NOT RECORD

This form should not be used where a lode location notice, tunnel site location notice, or mill site location is required.

Markings—A post must be not less than four inches in diameter, or a stone monument must be at least eighteen inches high. Witnesses are optional and are not required.

Section 2304, Public Resources Code, reads in part as follows. "(a) Within 90 days after the date of location of any placer mining claim hereafter located, the locator or locators thereof shall sink a discovery shaft upon the claim to a depth of at least 10 feet from the lowest part of the rim of the shaft at the surface, or shall drive a tunnel, adit, or open cut up the claim to at least 10 feet below the surface . . (b) in lieu of the discovery work required by paragraph (a) of this section, the locator of a placer mining claim may. within 90 days of location, excavate an open cut upon the claim, removing from the cut not less than seven cubic yards of material."

Annual Assessment work must also be performed within one year after the following first day of July from date of location.

Notice of Location
PLACER

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: Please take notice that:

1. The name of this claim is the Birch Placer Mining Claim.

Said claim is situated in the vicinity of Big Pine or in the Little Pine Mining District, County of Inyo, State of California.

The date of location is the Feb 5 day of Feb, 1957.

2. The undersigned locators are citizens of the United States, or have declared their intention to become such.

(TO BE FILLED OUT FOR SURVEYED LAND ONLY)

3. This claim is situated on public surveyed land and is described as follows:

The ..... of Section ....., in Township ....., Range .....

M.D.M., containing ..... acres.

(TO BE FILLED OUT FOR UNSURVEYED LAND ONLY)

4. This claim is situated on public unsurveyed lands and is described as follows:

Beginning at a discovery monument (tree, rock in place, stone, post or monument) upon which is posted the notice of location, running thence 150 ft East six hundred and sixty feet to a post marked ....., thence ..... thirteen hundred and twenty feet to a post marked ....., thence ..... six hundred and sixty feet to a post marked ....., thence ..... thirteen hundred and twenty feet to place of beginning; containing twenty acres.

All of said posts are at least 4 inches in diameter and set at least 1 foot in the ground and surrounded by a mound of stone.

5. This location is situated about 6 miles S.W. feet distant from:

Big Pine Calif (name some natural object or permanent monument)

---

6. All dips, variations, spurs, angles and deposits within the lines of this claim, together with all water and timber and any other rights appurtenant, allowed by the laws of this State or of the United States are hereby claimed.

LOCATORS

Bernard Bassi Lone Pine Calif

R. Dixon C. R. Denton Lone Pine Calif

STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE OF DISCOVERY WORK

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the undersigned locator.. that in accordance with the provisions of the Mining Law: the Locator has performed within 90 days from date of location, the following discovery work: .....

DATED ....., 19.....

LOCATION NOTICE

PLACER

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That the undersigned, Duane Rossi Gary Rossi Robt Bradley in compliance with the requirements of Chapter VI, Title 32, of the Revised Statutes of the United States and the local customs, laws and regulations, has this day located and claims the following described Placer Mining Grounds, viz:

Lum discovery monument 1500 ft east 660 ft South.

together with all water and timber appurtenant, allowed by law.

THIS CLAIM consisting of ..... acres, shall be known as Birch Creek Mining Claim. It is situated in Big Pine Mining District, County of Inyo, State of California, Section ....., Township ..... Range ..... Meridian .....

THIS CLAIM may be identified by its proximity to the following natural object or permanent monument, to-wit:

Six and a half miles south west of Big Pine

LOCATED this 10 day of Feb, 19 61. The date of the discovery and posting of this notice is the 10 day of Feb, 19 61.

LOCATORS

Duane Rossi
Gary Rossi
Robt Bradley

STATEMENT OF THE MARKING OF THE BOUNDARIES AND OF PERFORMANCE OF DISCOVERY WORK

The markings of the boundaries of the aforesaid Claim as required by Sec. 2303 Public Resources Code, are designated and described as:

Locators Duane Rossi
Robt Bradley
Gary Rossi

The locator has performed discovery work as required by Sec. 2304, Public Resources Code, as follows:

Locators

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

Saturday, September 4, 2021 FREE

A LIFE IN THE SIERRA

Duane Rossi is still going strong at 84

By Lunch

"I'm in damn good shape for an old, fat slob who can't hear."

So said Duane Rossi as he was peeling potatoes at his summer job as camp cook at Mammoth Lakes Pack Outfit.

84-year old Duane Rossi.

Ostensibly retired Duane Rossi.

Sheet: So how'd they lure you out of retirement?

Rossi: J.D. said they needed help. Nobody wants to work!

J.D. Summers is the Pack Outfit's 3rd generation owner. Rossi's mom and dad went to school with J.D.'s grandfather.

"I was loving retirement, but when friends call and they say they need help, well ..." explained Duane.

Rossi may be 84, but you wouldn't know it by the twinkle in his eye.

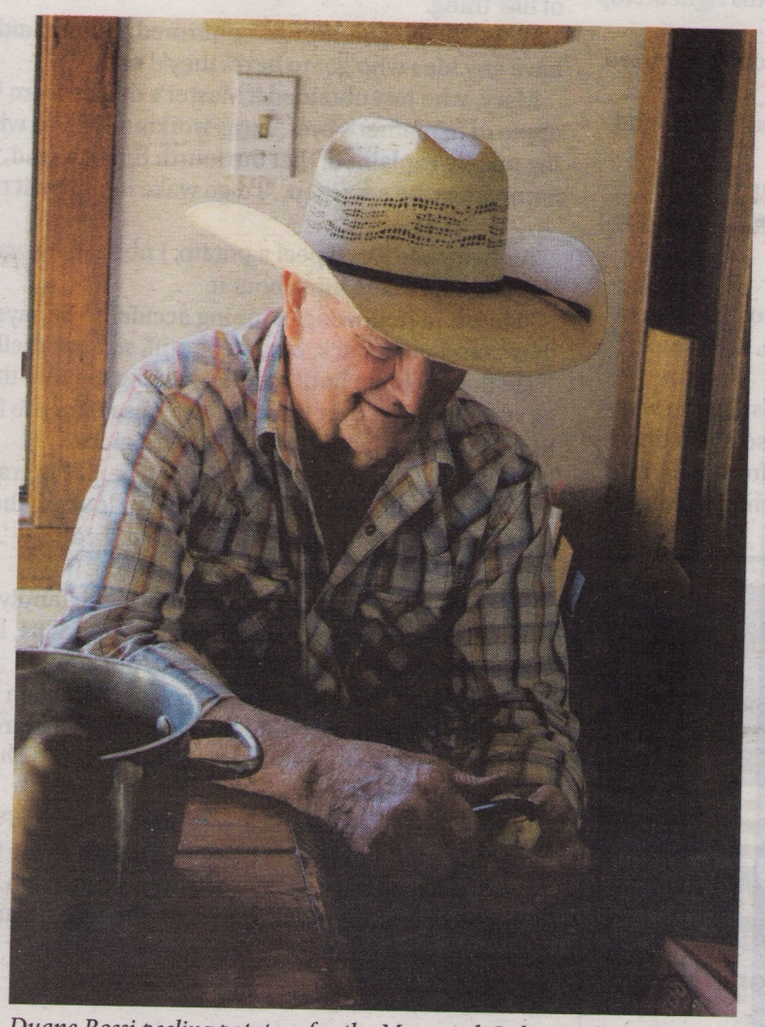
He's the product of a generation that had nothing and wanted for nothing. A generation of generalists versus specialists who just know a lot and are innately competent.

Rossi's worked jobs on drill rigs. He's been a miner, carpenter, packer, trapper. At one time, his steakhouse in Big Pine was ranked among the top 25 in California according to the Cattlemen's Association.

Born in Bishiop and raised in Big Pine on property his family has owned for more than a century, Rossi enlisted in the service at age 17 and was married at 18. His first wife very early on was diagnosed with Hodgkins disease. "Nobody lived that ever had it, but she did," said Duane.

The couple had three children.

His first job after getting out of the army was working for Jimmy Nicholas at the local service station. He'd work the graveyard shift from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. for $1.35/hour. From 9 a.m.to 4 p.m. he'd do ranch work for $1/hour. That was six days a week.



Duane Rossi peeling potatoes for the Mammoth Lakes Pack Outfit

"I had three kids in diapers," he explained. "You do what you gotta do."

Rossi owned Rossi's Corral, a combination restaurant and pool hall with a poker room and a dance floor, with his father and brother in the '60s. "We eventually sold out because we couldn't keep up with it," he said. The bars were packed. There were always movies shooting on location. It was insanity.

But really, Duane enjoyed trapping more. "After that, I trapped in the winters, worked for the cow outfits in the spring and pack stations in the summers."

He trapped from the age of five, first taught by his grandmother. He would trap the skunks and weasels around the chicken pens.

In the late '50s, the price of fur went sky-high and there were as many as 12 trappers in the valley.

Nowadays, he laments "you

see ROSSI, page 2

can't set a trap in the state of California." As a result, "All we got these days are predators - ravens, raccoons, mountain lions. When i was a kid, the only guy I knew who'd ever seen a mountain lion was my dad. Now, you can't find someone who hasn't seen one."

And he misses the songbirds. "My favorite songbird is the meadowlark and I haven't seen one in six or seven years," he says. "The crows and ravens are eating up all the songbird eggs."

He said, "When we were kids, we weren't on those things [pointing to my phone]. We were out shooting ... They used to have a bounty for crows and magpies at twenty-five cents a head."

Another thing that's been bugging him lately: forest management.

"The Forest became mismanaged as soon as they professionalized the management," he says.

"Fire is like Forest Service Christmas," he continued. "But with global warming, you've got to put the fires out quick and thin the forest. When I was growing up, there was a sawmill on every creek."

Rossi paused to dig a photo of a folder, taken in the late '30s or early '40s at the Inyo Lumber Company Sawmill, located where Millpond Recreation area is now.

"Would you rather look at this?" he asked rhetorically, "or look at a photo of a bunch of houses going up in a wildfire? You should stack those photos right on top of each other and ask people what they'd rather have!"

A final topic: The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Rossi has mixed feelings about the LADWP.

On the one hand, "Without L.A., we'd look like Minden/Gardnerville. The land would be all private. You wouldn't be able to do a damn thing."

On the other hand, "They originally took the surface water. But the wells are sucking us dry now." He says some of his former duck hunting spots have all dried up.

Rossi divorced his first wife when the kids were in grammar school. He then remained single for 35 years before meeting his second wife, Marie, at a dance. Together, they started Rossi's Steak and Spaghetti in Big Pine.

When I asked him the best way to prepare a steak, he replied, "It's not the way you cook it. It's the way you buy it. Buy the best meat you can buy, so if you don't cook it just right, well, you still won't get any complaints. I bought from Bill Pratt."

When Rossi was 60 and his wife was 48, they quite unexpectedly had a daughter, Mary.

"She thought she had a tumor," said Duane with a grin, "but I felt a kick one night. I knew she was pregnant. She said I was crazy and that it was just a 'change of life' thing."

When the pregnancy was confirmed, Duane said his friends razzed him. "You have any idea who got to her?" they'd ask.

Mary, who just obtained a Master's degree from UC-Santa Cruz, became the apple of her father's eye. "I was working so hard when the other three were growing up," he explained, that the fourth time around, he relished being present. Sometimes, he admitted, "I'd go wake her up just to play with her."

As I watched Rossi peel a potato, I noticed he was missing the pinkie on his right hand. i asked him about it.

"I lost it in [following] a roping accident," he says matter-of-factly. "They said they could put it back, but it'd be stiff, so I said hell, cut it off."

He then held up both hands, showing me that the fingers on his right hand had all sort of shifted over time to compensate for the loss of his pinkie, whereas the fingers on his left hand were a lot straighter.

Rossi still lives on the 12 acre plot of land his grandfather bought in Big Pine more than a century ago. He said if you look up the old county record, it says in notation that "Anthony Rossi deeds this property ... for the love, devotion and future welfare of Rossi children forever."

So that's why the property remains in the family.

Finally, when I asked him about working at 84, he told a story which demonstrates that a lifetime of work runs in the family.

He said his Uncle Rafael was 76 years old when WWII broke out and immediately hired on as a carpenter in a wartime shipyard to support the war effort.

"He took all his money in war bonds," recalls Duane, because he never took a paycheck in his life.

While the recent forest closure shut down the Pack Outfit for the season, it's probably a fair bet Duane Rossi will return to the kitchen next summer. But, as he says, "I'd like to have a kid come in so I can teach him."

The stories alone would be worth the price of admission.

Sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

"Can't anybody here play this game?"
-Casey Stengel

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In a crater, then a hot ditch

2016

Crater Mountain is easily seen from all directions southwest of Big Pine and is driven past by thousands of cars as it sits just west of U.S. Highway 395 south of Big Pine. Once an active volcano, evidenced by the crater on the west side, Crater Mountain now sits idle, surrounded by sharp volcanic rock and sparse vegetation, with outstanding views upclose of the Sierra Nevada.

Rising to an elevation of 6,055 feet, Crater Mountain is considered to be one of the largest volcanoes in the area, of which there are many, in a BLM-protected wilderness area some 7,500 acres in size. Located in what is known as the Big Pine Volcanic Field, there are many cone-shaped hills and peaks southwest of Crater Mountain towards Armstrong Canyon. This is a wonderful natural area with a lot of natural and local history in the Owens Valley.

My brother got to Bishop before 9 a.m. on Saturday, and after a nice breakfast at the casino, we headed down to Big Pine and turned right on Crocker Avenue. We drove about three miles and turned left onto good dirt McMurry Meadows Road. We quickly crossed over Little Pine Creek and then drove about four to five miles to the saddle west of Crater Mountain. There's a nice little parking area on the left for a few vehicles as we pulled in next to an older Toyota.

I hiked up here solo last year and was already familiar with terrain as we saddled our day packs and started hiking east towards Crater Mountain. From the parking area to the top of Crater Mountain is less than two miles with moderate elevation gain, but the sharp lava rocks makes it rough on the feet while moving more slowly and carefully.

It took about an hour to reach the crater below the summit and the steepest part of the hike. We spotted a use-trail heading towards the summit and followed it the short distance up onto the horseshoe-shaped summit ridge.

It was quite breezy on the ridge with large patches of snow still remaining from the storm two weeks prior. We moseyed our way slowly around the summit until the final short push to the top on the north side. The wind was howling as we stayed a short time, signed the register and left the summit towards the crater.

The closer we got to the crater, the less the wind blew, heating us up slightly. We hiked down into the crater, kicked back for a while, then decided to head back to the car and the next adventure.

In less than an hour we were back at the car and it was still early in the afternoon. We drove up to Glacier Lodge, but there was too much snow for my brother so we started back down the mountain.

Driving back to Bishop we stopped at a hot ditch by Keough's for a relaxing soak,

View from the summit at the crater and the Sierra Nevada.

Hike to Second Lake

My plan was to get up early and be at the trailhead by sunrise to start the hike to Second Lake in North Fork Big Pine Canyon. If you're looking for a moderately strenuous hike with an awesome payoff at the end, this trail is the right one.

I left Bishop before 6 a.m. and after a coffee and gas stop, I turned right at the Mobil gas station in Big Pine 20 minutes later. I love early mornings just before sunrise, everything always seems so fresh and new.

Shortly thereafter, I pulled into a parking spot at the end of the road. Excited and eager, I was on the trail at 6:40 a.m. with only the sounds of Big Pine Creek and a nice breeze through the trees next to me.

This was the eighth time I've been up the North Fork Big Pine this year and it seems to get better every time. The welcome cloud cover early, and throughout the day, made the uphill hiking more enjoyable than strenuous. The hike begins with some gentle switchbacks that meet up with the old road to Second Falls Campground. Closed for more than 30 years now, the road into the old campground is now a nice trail next to North Fork Big Pine Creek.

I crossed over the creek on a wood bridge and took the trail straight ahead that goes high above the canyon. At 1.7 miles from the trailhead, I passed a trail on the right that leads up to High Meadows and Baker Creek. The view of the Palisades from High Meadows is spectacular and well worth the steep grade. I reached the top of the headwall at two miles as the trail levels out next to the creek.

This spot is incredible for fall colors and I can tell you that it's starting to change. The green aspen trees of the summer are transitioning into autumn colors in this magnificent canyon.

I picked up the pace a little and before I knew it, I was three miles in and turning left for a break at the old Lon Chaney cabin next to the creek. It is now a wilderness ranger cabin but was once the summer residence of the late actor built in 1925. I don't recommend writing your signature in the wood of the old cabin but do check out the old signatures, pretty cool.

It was 7:50 a.m. with the sun shining brightly on the peaks ahead. The 1.9 miles from the cabin to Second Lake ascends mildly through the forest with small streams coming down from the right.

The farther I went, the views of Temple Crag, North Palisade, Mount Sill, Starlight Peak and Mount Agassiz became more clear and prominent. The sun hitting the many aretes of Temple Crag are amazing this time of day.

Just before reaching First Lake, I passed a junction to Black Lake. At 4.3 miles, a right turn here leads to many beautiful lakes above and is part of a loop that comes back around to Second Lake.

A little less than a half mile later, I arrived at Second Lake at 8:45 a.m. I've been here a number of times in my life but never this early and let me tell you, morning is the best time to see the beautiful aqua blue glacial colors of Second Lake. The clouds were gray and white with a very cool breeze, prompting me to put on my sweatshirt.

The sun shining on Temple Crag above Second Lake

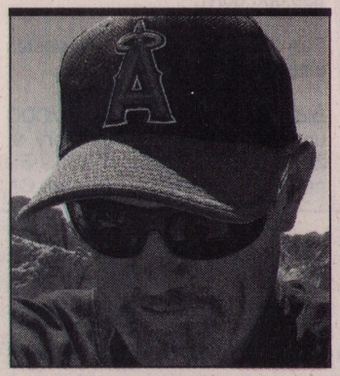
Photo by Craig Jacks

There are many spots to hang out here, either high above the east shore on smooth granite or near the south side by an old mine. I spent two hours walking around near the old mine and just relaxing below Temple Crag and above Second Lake. I left at 10:35 a.m. and had a wonderful return hike with some slight precipitation near the end.

After a great morning hike, I was back in Bishop by 1 p.m., had a nice lunch with pops and back home.

Supreme vistas at High Meadows

(Hiked on Nov. 6, 2016)



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

With some well deserved time off during the first two weeks of November, I felt it necessary to get out and do as many hikes as I could in the Sierra Nevada before it was too late. There had already been a nice storm at the beginning of the month and the cold air was settling in for the season, making it tougher to get into the high country. The Big Pine Canyon trailhead near Glacier Lodge has a number of hiking options, from a short hike with a nice picnic to any number of miles-long adventures. I had been up here a few days earlier for a short hike up the north fork next to the creek and was eyeballing the trail to Baker Creek while imagining the incredible views from High Meadows.

A few years ago I hiked up to High Meadows on a one-way extravaganza from the Big Pine Canyon trailhead, up Baker Canyon, onto Grunion Plateau and eventually down to South Lake. Besides the incredible scenery I saw that day, I vividly remember wearing shorts and getting caught right in the middle of a summer storm, packed with driving rain and a thunderous lightning storm. I survived that day unharmed but still think about it when I'm near Thunder and Lightning Lake, beneath Vagabond Peak or Cloudripper. I learned a lot that day about preparation and pre-hike strategy, consequently keeping me out of that type of situation since then.

The Baker Creek Trail is a seldom-used path that sees minimal foot traffic, unlike the highly popular North Fork Big Pine Trail that sees thousands of hikers and backpackers during a busy summer. My plan for the day was to hike the 4.5 miles and 2,600 feet higher, to High Meadows and revel in the supreme vistas and then head back the same way I came.

Similar to the other hikes I had done during the first week of November, it was cold and wasn't supposed to warm up. That didn't matter much to me because I was prepared for the elements and looking forward to this outing.

I departed Bishop before 7 a.m. and drove south on US Highway 395 for 15 miles to Big Pine and turned right on Crocker Street. While slowly driving the 14 miles to the trailhead I noticed a large bird flying directly above me and in the same direction. It initially looked like a seagull but after it swooped to the left I totally saw the beautiful white head and large black body of a majestic bald eagle. I've only seen a handful of America's bird in my life so I pulled over hoping it would land on a tree and let me photograph it but it was too elusive and disappeared within seconds. Total bummer.

A Clark's nutcracker is flying high above Big Pine Canyon with Middle Palisade and Norman Clyde Peak behind.

Photo by Craig Jacks

I pulled into the small parking lot at the end of the road at 7:45 a.m. and was surprised by the half dozen cars already there, since recently I've been the only vehicle at the trailhead. Within moments I could hear the musical sound of Big Pine Creek and the ever-present breeze blowing down canyon through the trees. The hike started as I crossed over the north fork on a 30-year-old bridge then promptly turned right at the signed junction, beginning a series of switchbacks that lead to the old campground road above.

I crossed North Fork Big Pine Creek again before connecting with the high trail that leads up canyon and eventually many gorgeous lakes. The hiking here is moderately wonderful with great views ahead and back down to Kidd Mountain. I reached the junction to Baker Creek and made a right turn. This is the point where the trail becomes less popular and its highly unlikely I'll be seeing another soul the rest of the day.

From the junction the trail climbs steeply up to the top of the ridge then descends slightly before starting a long steep climb through the forest. The only tracks I could see were made by deer and coyotes and the ones I left behind me. The trail arrived at the base of the slanting canyon wall and up I went for the last 1.5 miles on one long switchback up to High Meadows. I bounced off the trail at the high point and was rewarded with a spectacular 360-degree view of the entire Palisade Region, from The Thumb to the south to Mount Agassiz to the west. This vantage point presents a memorable view of the 14,000-foot peaks, as well as South and North Fork Big Pine Canyon.

At 10,300 feet, High Meadows is the perfect spo for mountain relaxation an if you're lucky you'll see, like I did, a nice size herd of mule deer running at to speed in the valley below. My day was perfect but the incoming clouds unfortunately shortened it to my dismay.

(Craig Jackson is a Bisho resident and avid hiker/ backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierraci51@gmail.com.)

(Hiked on March 26, 2017)

The south and north forks of Big Pine Canyon offer some of the best scenery on the entire east side of the Sierra Nevada. From Brainerd Lake and Finger Lake in the south fork to the seven magnificent lakes in the north fork, the trails in this area are perfect for day hikes or overnight adventures. The last time I was up here the year was 2016 and the snow was just starting to fall and cover the trails with a fresh winter dusting.

Since that day back in December, this portion of the Sierra Nevada has seen many feet of snow at the lakes and on the peaks at the higher elevations. In years past, Glacier Lodge Road closes for the winter approximately 2.5 miles from the trailhead near the Sage Flat Campground. There is no plowing of the snow beyond this point, therefore it is only possible to reach this trailhead by hiking 2.5 miles on a partially snow-covered road. This is what I encountered last Sunday when I chose to check out the snow conditions in both forks.

A few years ago I ventured up the north fork in mid-March and remember reaching Second Falls, only to be greeted by thigh-deep snow and impossible hiking conditions without snowshoes. The plan for last week's hike was to do a loop, starting up the north fork and returning back down the south fork, or as far as I could comfortably go.

There were four cars parked at the "Road Closed" sign when I pulled in a few minutes after 9 a.m. I stepped out of the car and was greeted with what seemed like the perfect breeze; cool mountain style with a hint of warmth. I could tell immediately that this was going to be a good hiking day.

The road beyond the barrier was almost snow-free for the first few hundred feet, with intermittent patches here and there. The views up the South Fork Big Pine Canyon were out of this world, with white puffy clouds near the headwall and slightly darker clouds clinging to the 14,000-foot peaks of the Palisades. The original plan was to walk to the end of the road and jump on the trail there, but instead I took the hiker/stock trail that begins near the pack station and leads to the north fork.

The trail immediately ascends the north slope of Big Pine Canyon, with ever-expanding views of the peaks behind and the glacial formation of the south fork. Took my breath away for a moment. There was some snow on the trail but not enough to hinder my progress. I rounded the corner into the north fork, noticed a small herd of deer above me, and continued upward encountering more snow. I dropped down into the small walk-in campground next to the bridge over the North Fork Big Pine Creek and took a break at one of the snow-covered picnic tables.

There was no one around when I crossed the creek on the wooden bridge and landed on the old road that used to bring cars up to the now-closed upper campground. The snow was abundant here and the copper birch seemed to be lying on their sides, due to the incredible weight of the hefty snow. I made my way down the old road and then jumped on the South Fork Trail, in the direction of the trailhead. I reached the trailhead, wandered around the trout pond and Glacier Lodge Campground for a while and then proceeded down the snowy Glacier Lodge Road. While hiking down the road, I discovered why the road was really closed: downed trees. Four seemingly healthy pine trees succumbed to the rain and snow, making it impossible for vehicle traffic.

For now the road is closed but will soon be busy with vacationers trying their luck in the lakes and streams, while the downed trees and snow on the road will be long forgotten.

The Trout Pond at Glacier Lodge sits silently still, for now.

Photo by Craig Jackson

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

The Second Lake on the North Fork of Big Pine Canyon

Photo by Craig Jackson

There are so many great trails within a 60-mile radius of downtown Bishop, traffic-less, stop light-less wonderful cruising.

Some of the great drives to trailheads within 60 miles of Bishop include a few of the best in the Sierra Nevada and all of California. For instance, one can leave Bishop and drive for an hour to Lone Pine and choose from a cluster of tremendous hiking trails as well as Onion Valley west of Independence and Big Pine Canyon. To the north there are outstanding trailheads also; for example McGee Canyon and Mosquito Flat with the Crystal Lake and Duck Pass trailheads in Mammoth Lakes Basin. This is just a minute description, many more examples in the hiking books aimed towards the Sierra Nevada east side. The number of trails with pristine destinations in the high country within an hour of Bishop is so huge that a whole summer could be spent covering less than half.

The first summer that I actually lived in Bishop was three years ago and practically each and every day of that season was spent on one of these trails, within a short drive from home. Over the last two years most of the hikes have been duplicates with new memories stacked on top of old ones and a future full of surprises and old friends.

Two years at this exact time it was possible to get up into the high country. For example I was able to hike to Second Lake in North Fork Big Pine Canyon virtually snow-free. This year it'll be quite a bit later until my boots see dirt in this lake-strewn canyon – but the wait is always worth it.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

Second Lake

CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

(Hiked on Feb. 6)
2015

The forecast for last Saturday in the eastern Sierra was calling for at least a foot of new snow above 8,500-feet, high winds in the mountains and showers in the valley. Definitely good news for this area, which desperately needs precipitation and a lot more snow at the higher elevations.

Three days prior to the storm, I picked up my 86-year-old father from his home in Bishop and headed south to Big Pine for a nice lunch at the Country Kitchen restaurant. The cheeseburgers and fries we had were delicious and the view of the White Mountains to the east is very relaxing.

We finished our lunch and decided to take the 11-mile drive up Glacier Lodge Road for a nice walk near the old lodge, the trout pond and near the Big Pine Creek trailhead. It's so tranquil this time of year with the campground closed and the Glacier Lodge General Store boarded up for the winter. It was still three days before the storm but the wind was blowing stiffly as the temperature started to drop.

We spent about 30 minutes wandering around the lodge when we saw a hiker finishing his hike at the trailhead. I've been up both the South and North Fork's of Big Pine Creek many times and am familiar with this area. He told me he had just hiked to Second Lake, 4.9 miles one-way with a 2,200-foot elevation gain. He also described the trail as being mostly snow from the Lon Chaney cabin to Second Lake with a well worn hiker track.

Upon hearing this news about the trail and having already heard about the incoming storm in three days, I decided to give it a shot on Friday, the eve of the storm. I left Bishop at 8 a.m.
and drove south on U.S. Highway 395 for about 15 miles to Big Pine and made a right on Crocker Avenue, next to the Mobil Gas station. Crocker Ave. becomes Glacier Lodge Road in a couple of miles and after 11 miles form U.S. Highway 395, I pulled into the day-use parking area at the Big Pine Creek trailhead. I brought plenty of warm clothes, as well as my Micro-spikes, and at 8:30 a.m. I was on my way up the trail.

Right off the bat I could tell it was going to be a very windy and cold day, but that didn't dissuade me from getting to Second Lake. I passed some private cabins on the right as the trail parallels Big Pine Creek before crossing the 30-year-old bridge over First Falls. Just beyond the bridge I made a right at the trail junction to North Fork and then started some switchbacks up to the old campground road. I took a breather at the road to admire Kid Mountain to the south, which soars 4,000 feet above Glacier Lodge and also Palisade Crest, Norman Clyde Peak and Middle Palisade to the west. I crossed a second bridge and then made two switchbacks up to the high trail. The lower trail on the left is a remnant of the old road to the former Second Falls Campground. In 1983 a multi-day, warm storm liquefied a record snow pack, flooded the South Fork of Big Pine Creek, and destroyed the road to the trailhead parking and the car campground. I would like to personally thank Mother Nature for reclaiming her landscape.

I then started climbing moderately on the higher trail and at 1.7 miles I passed the junction on the right to Baker Creek. With no snow on the trail at this point, the uphill hiking was wonderful and the stiff wind down the canyon was invigorating, to say the least.

I approached Second Falls at the top of the canyon, entered John Muir Wilderness and a level area shaded by aspens and pines. With some snow now on the trail at the 2.9-mile mark, I arrived at the Lon Chaney cabin that was built in 1925. It was built as a private residence by the horror-film actor, who loved the Sierra Nevada.

The trail beyond the cabin, now completely covered in snow and ice, climbs moderately for the next mile with grand views of Mount Agassiz, Mount Sill, Starlight and Thunderbolt Peaks, North Palisade and Temple Crag. I stopped and put on my Micro-spikes as more ice appeared on the trail and wind blew fiercely in my face.

Despite the cold, windy weather, the sun was shinning last week over Temple Crag and Second Lake

Continuing on the well worn path in the snow, I climbed a couple more switchbacks and at the 4.3-mile mark I came upon the junction to Black Lake. Continuing straight ahead on the main trail for 0.2 I stood on some snowy rocks looking down at First Lake. All but frozen-over, except for the inlet from Second Lake, First Lake looked gorgeous as it sits below Mount Alice.

A short distance up the trail at the 4.9-mile mark, I arrived at Second Lake. During hiking season, Second Lake, at 10,500 feet, shines beautifully with its turquoise glacial water below Temple Crag. But on this hike, it was covered in ice with 80-mph wind blowing down from the Palisades.

I had a short break at Second Lake, enjoying the view but not so much liking the dirt and rocks blowing in my face. At noon, I started hiking back down the trail as the wind continued howling with the sound of trees cracking in the distance. On my way up there were no downed trees across the trail but on the way down there were now three. I picked up the pace dramatically and after another short break at the cabin I arrived back at the trailhead at 1:50 p.m. Beautiful, yet blustery day on the trail!

At a glance:

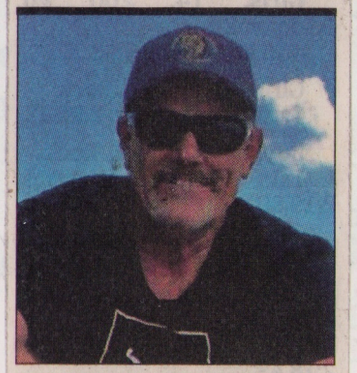
- Cold hike in winter, bring plenty of warm clothes
- Know your limitations, turn around if not comfortable hiking on ice.
- Micro-spikes not mandatory but help from slipping and sliding
- 9.8 miles round trip to Second Lake with a 2200-foot gain
- Check weather forecast before attempting this hike
- Sierra Nevada photo ops

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

peaks, pristine lakes await west of Big Pine

Some of the tallest and most dramatic peaks in the Sierra Nevada stand majestic and high west of Big Pine near the trailhead for the hike to the beautiful and pristine lakes in North Fork Big Pine Creek Canyon.

With many lakes to choose as your destination, the length of your hike depends on physical ability and desire to see as many lakes and peaks as you would like to. The hike described here is a loop hike to eight alpine lakes on a well-marked and, at times, somewhat challenging trail.



CRAIG JACKSON
GUEST COLUMNIST

To get to the trailhead from Big Pine, go west on Crocker Street, which turns into Glacier Lodge Road, and follow to the end just past the day-use area near Glacier Lodge. There is a large backpackers' parking lot near the pack station that begins a couple of miles before the day-use trailhead. For the first mile this trailhead has maximum sun exposure but the views of Middle Palisade, Norman Clyde Peak and Palisade Crest are magnificent.

From the parking area at the end of the road, pass the trailhead sign and hike next to Big Pine Creek on the left and some summer cabins to the right. Continue on the trail to a bridge at First Falls to a signed junction and go right to North Fork Big Pine. After a few switchbacks, join the old road to Second Falls Campground, annihilated by a flood in 1983 when a warm storm quickly melted a record snow pack. Cross the creek on a wooden bridge and join the main trail coming down from the backpacker's trailhead.

At just over one mile, pass a trail on the right that climbs steeply to Baker Lake with outstanding views of the Palisades near High Meadows. Continue straight on the trail towards Second Falls, cascading down a narrow gorge at the top of the switchbacks while entering John Muir Wilderness. At the top of the switchbacks the trail levels off, with plenty of trees offering welcome shade next to North Fork Big Pine Creek. Just under three miles, a stone ranger cabin appears to the left next to the creek, a great spot for a break and a snack. It was originally built in 1925 by film star Lon Chaney.

The first views of the impressive Temple Crag and Palisades come into view while gradually ascending on the trail for the next mile. Arrive at a trail junction at just over four miles and the beginning of the loop; turn right towards Black Lake and attack some steep switchbacks until reaching the top of the ridge. Picture-perfect views of First Lake and Second Lake below are a reward for the uphill effort. Reach Black Lake at 10,600 feet and enjoy level walking around the south side.

Easy hiking gets you to Fourth Lake at just over six miles from your car. There was once a lodge called Glacier Camp above the lake until 1964 when it was intentionally removed. Today there is only a few well-placed boulders where the foundation once stood. Once across Fourth Lake's outlet, there's a four-way junction at the six-and-a-half mile mark.

A right turn here and a half-mile later another junction appears to the right that leads to small, yet gorgeous, Summit Lake. Climb up on some granite slabs on the north side, break out your lunch and enjoy the views to the south of 14,000-foot peaks such as Mount Sill, Polemonium Peak, North Palisade and Thunderbolt Peak. After a side trip to equally incredible Sixth Lake, return to the four-way junction and go right to incredible 20-acre Fifth Lake, which is a classic Sierra lake created by ancient glaciers.

Once back at the main trail, a right turn starts the switchback descent on a very well-graded trail towards Third Lake, passing a spur called the Glacier Trail, which takes energized hikers uphill to Palisade Glacier. Below at 9.5 miles, Third Lake and its glacial created light green color comes into view. The Palisades make postcard views as the trail passes above the lake before descending to the jewel of the entire hike, Second Lake.

Temple Crag towers over Second Lake and its aquamarine waters.

2014

Photo by Craig Jackson

Arguably one of the most photographed lakes in the Eastern Sierra, Second Lake and its turquoise water sits directly below the ultra-impressive Temple Crag. This is a perfect spot for one last break before returning to the trail, passing above First Lake at 9,950 feet, and arriving at the original junction and completing the loop. After absorbing the magnificent scenery and alpine wonder of North Fork Big Pine Canyon, enjoy the five-mile hike back to the trailhead with memories that will last a lifetime.

AT A GLANCE:

- Sixteen miles for full loop to Sixth Lake or 9.8 miles round trip to Second Lake.
- Elevation: 7,760 feet at trailhead; 11,200 feet at Sixth Lake; 10,160 feet at Second Lake.
- Excellent fishing in all lakes.
- Early summer wildflowers and eye-popping fall colors.
- Mosquitoes in June and July.
- Camping at all lakes for once in a lifetime peak bagging adventures.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here last year from Southern California.)

The Inyo Register

EASTERN SIERRA HISTORY

A-10 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2019

Fred Eaton – the lesser known water king

Fred Eaton's Owens Valley Poultry Ranch (one of the largest in the U.S. at that time) south of Big Pine, circa 1912.

When one reflects on those responsible for the presence of the Los Angeles Aqueduct here in the Eastern Sierra, the image of William Mulholland invariably and immediately comes to mind. And while it is true, "the Chief" was responsible for designing, engineering and overseeing the construction of this monolithic project, the person culpable for the idea of moving the liquid gold from the land of Inyo (and eventually Mono) to the yards and fountains of the city of Los Angeles, is former Los Angeles Mayor as well as Eastern Sierra resident, Fred Eaton.

Born in 1856, Frederick Eaton, was the sixth Anglo child to be born in Los Angeles, and was its first "Native Son" Engineer. He was born in a small adobe home, which stood at what is now the intersection of First and Spring Streets. The building in which he was born later was to become the first Los Angeles City jail. His parents were Judge Benjamin S. Eaton and Mary (Hays) Eaton who had migrated to Los Angeles in 1849.

Eaton's father helped start the city of Pasadena. He bought land in the west San Gabriel Valley, raised cattle, planted orange trees and was instrumental in starting the southern California citrus industry. Judge Eaton become the first president of the San Gabriel Orange Grove Association and the popular, sweet produce helped bring substantial wealth to the family.

It is interesting to note Judge Eaton brought water from the creeks of the nearby San Gabriel mountains by a gravity flow system, using ditches and pipes to irrigate the new citrus lands along his Orange Grove Avenue property.

Fred Eaton was a product of Los Angeles public schools, and later attended Santa Clara College. He became interested in civil engineering at an early age and studied the subject while he worked as a surveyor and engineer during the transitional period of Los Angeles turning from Spanish to American control.

When Eaton was 14, he entered a competition sponsored by the City of Los Angeles and won $100 for his original design to reconstruct the Old Plaza, the historical center of the original el Pueblo de Los Angeles. His design actually became the basis of the work performed on the Plaza during its reconstuction.

Eaton married Helen Burdick, a member of another Los Angeles pioneer family, and developed a zeal for gardening and

DAVID WOODRUFF
COLUMNIST

raising livestock in his homelife

Fred Eaton contributed much to the development of Los Angeles. He assisted in mapping and defining city property and was himself appointed city surveyor and engineer in 1885. From 1889-1890, he served as City Engineer, and designed a sewer system that was the nucleus of the city's current system used today.

Eaton's skills led him to become the superintendent of the privately owned Los Angeles Water Company, and also Chief Engineer for the Los Angeles Railway Company. In this position, he built the first electric railway in the city, which was one of the first attempts made in the United States to operate a transportation system with electricity. In 1898, he became the mayor of the burgeoning southern California municipality.

Fred's dad loved the outdoors and took young Fred and his family on frequent camping and fishing trips to the Owens Valley as early as the 1870s. The route at that time was nothing more than the rough trail used by the big freighters traveling between the Cerro Gordo silver mines and Los Angeles. It was a four to five-day trip in the Eaton's horse and wagon. The sight of the numerous, clear and swift flowing streams flowing down from the Sierra Nevada Mountains made a lasting impression on young Fred.

The population of L.A. was about 4,000 people when Eaton was born. By the time he became City Engineer, 50,000 people called the city home, and by the end of his term as mayor, it had mushroomed to over 100,000 residents. It was clear the small pueblo on the arid coastal plain would continue to grow... provided it could meet the needs of its residents and new arrivals, including water.

As superintendent of the City's privately held water system, Eaton was acutely aware of its shortcomings. The Los Angeles River was its primary source, supplemented by pumping from groundwater wells. During extra dry years, the water department struggled to meet the needs of its customers. Fred and the city fathers realized that without more water, the city could not sustain its dynamic growth.

Eaton's childhood memories of the bountiful mountain streams of the Eastern Sierra had never left him. In fact, as early as 1892, he had designed a plan to move water from the Owens Valley via a gravity flow system, to the Indian Wells Valley (near present day Ridgecrest) to irrigate crops in that desert landscape. That plan did not come to fruition, but the idea of using the "wasted" Owens Valley water for what he viewed as the greater good, never left his mind.

When running for mayor, Eaton ran on a campaign of making the private water system a municipal one. Eaton won, and William Mulholland took over as the water company's superintendent when Eaton became mayor, and a close personal and professional relationship developed between the two men.

It took a few years, but the City of Los Angeles was able to take over the private water system by 1902. A few years earlier, Eaton had already told Mulholland of the magnificent river that flowed into a saline lake 200 hundred miles distant. Using local land surveys and an aneroid, Eaton had concluded the water could be moved the entire distance from the Owens Valley to the Los Angeles basin, via gravity and siphon.

In 1904, via horse and wagon, Eaton took Mulholland on a trip to the Owens Valley, so he could see for himself the vast water resources that were available. Mulholland was convinced the Owens River was the solution to L.A.'s water shortage and began his own plans to design, engineer and construct the infamous Los Angeles Aqueduct.

Eaton's role in what came to be known as the Water Wars was not finished. Under the guise of desiring to become a rancher, he began buying up Owens Valley lands with water rights, with the secret intent to resell the land to the City for the purpose of exporting the water. Eaton soon had purchased thousands of acres of Owens Valley and Mono County land, including a good portion of Long Valley, which later would be used to build the Crowley Lake reservoir.

But Eaton did not sell all the Eastern Sierra land he had purchased back to the City. He kept a few hundred acres a bit south of Big Pine, moved onto the property and became an Owens Valley resident. On this land, he constructed Owens River Poultry Ranch, one of the largest poultry operations in the United States at that time. Eaton also kept his Long Valley property. He became a founding member of the Inyo Good Road Club, was instrumental in promoting the Club's El Camino Sierra project, and ironically, became a prominent member of his Owens Valley community. As the conflict over water between Los Angeles and the residents of the Owens Valley escalated in the 1920s, Eaton became a vocal opponent of the City and what he felt was its "winner takes all, take no prisoners" approach to obtaining virtually all the Owens Valley water.

Relations between Mulholland and Eaton soured. Not only was Eaton now supporting the Valley people that stood in the way of L.A. taking the entire Owens River, he also tried to sell his Long Valley property, (the site coveted by L.A. for its storage reservoir) to the City for an amount Mulholland felt unreasonable. The two didn't talk for a number of years.

Fred Eaton eventually moved back to the city of his birth and sold his Long Valley property to the City, but not for the profit he had hoped. He and Mulholland reconciled their differences in a brief encounter shortly before Eaton passed away.

Eaton's association with the Eastern Sierra is present in a number of ways beyond the unpopular Aqueduct. He created the first commercial venture at Whittemore Hot Springs and gave it to his daughter who operated it for a number of years. There is an old ranch house in the Long Valley area still owned by the Eaton family and the entrance to the former Big Pine area poultry ranch, is still marked by two large cement pillars.

(David Woodruff has lived with his love of his life, Gayle, in the Eastern Sierra and Death Valley for more than 26 years. He is the author of several books on Eastern Sierra history and along with Gayle and pup Hanaupah, spends his time researching and exploring this magical region. He now lives in Gardnerville, Nevada.)

Palisades named by the Calif Geological Survey in 1864
William Brewer - "from a long distance they saw a range of peaks which we called 'the Palisades'. These were unlike the rest of the crest in outline and color --- they were very grand and fantastic in shape".

Crater Mt. elev 6,055 largest cone in Big Pine volcanic field
Colosseum Mt. elev 12,473 first ascent by Chester Versteeg in 1922
Mt Perkins elev 12,591 first ascent before 1910 by U.S. survey party
Goodale Mt. elev 12,790, first ascent in 1939 by Norman Clyde, Allan MacRae, and Albion Whitney. Named for pioneer family
Striped Mt. elev 13,120 first ascent in 1905 by George R. Davis named by Bolton Brown in 1895
Cardinal Mt elev 13,397 first ascent in 1922 by George Downing, Jr
Mt Tinemaha elev 12,561 first ascent in 1937 by Chester Versteeg, named for Piaute indian chief
Split Mt elev 14,058 first called Southeast Palisade, first ascent in 1887 by Frank Sauque & others
Mt Prater elev 13,329 A.H. and Myrtle Prater were climbers in the 1920's first ascent in 1948 by Fred L. Jones
Birch Mt elev 13,665 first ascent in 1887 by J.W. Bledsoe, Indian Name Pack Rung = Mt of Store
Mt Bolton-Brown elev 13,538 named for Professor Coit Brown of Stanford, first ascent in 1922 by Chester Versteeg & Rudolph Berls
Ed Lare Pk elev 13,520 Ed Lare was a climber in the 1960's Lare pass is between Mt Bolton-Brown & Ed Lare Pk, first ascent in 1930 by Norman Clyde
The Thumb elev 13,888 sometimes called East Palisade, first ascent in 1921 by W.B. Putnam
Peak 13,165 first ascent in 1926 by Norman Clyde
Peak 12,554
Disappointment Pk elev 13,917 first ascent in 1919 by J.M. Davis, A L Jordan and H.H. Bliss who thought they were on Middle Palisade
Middle Palisade elev 14,040 first ascent in 1921 by F.P. Farquhar & A.H. Hall
Norman Clyde Pk elev 13,920 first ascent in 1930 by Norman Clyde (his ashes were scattered ~~put~~ here)
Mt Williams elev 13,659 named for Larry Williams, founder of P.S.O.M. (Palisade School of Mountaineering)
Kid Mt elev 11,896 first ascent in 1940 by Norman Clyde

Palisade Crest elev 13,520 first pinnacles ascended in 1954 by John + Ruth Mardenhall
(also called Saw-tooth mtns)

Mt. Jepson elev 13,390 named for Willis Linn Jepson, U.C. Botany Professor (Jepson Plant Guide 1921)
first ascent in 1939 by Don McGeein, Chet Ernett + Evelyn Ernett
(also called Pine Marten Peak)

Peak 12,341

Mt Sill elev 14,162 named for Edward Sill, U.C. Literature professor, first ascent in 1903
(NINAMISHI - GUARDIAN OF THE VALLEY) by Joseph Le Conte, James Moffitt, Robert Pike, + James Hutchinson

Polemonium Peak elev 14,200 named for high altitude wildflower, first ascent in 1930
by Jules Eichorn, Glen Dawson, John Olmsted, + Charles Dodge

North Palisade elev 14,242 in 1879 it was named Dusy Peak, in 1895 it was renamed
Mt Jordan. First ascent in 1903 by James Hutchinson, Joseph Le Conte + James Moffitt

Starlight Peak elev 14,200 first ascent in 1930 by Norman Clyde

Thunderbolt Pk elev 14,003 first ascent in 1931 by Norman Clyde, R.L.M. Underhill,
Bestor Robinson, F.P. Farquhar, Glen Dawson, Lewis Clark + Jules Eichorn.
this was the last 14,000 pk climbed. named for lightning bolt which
struck near Jules Eichorn on climb.

Mt Gayley elev 13,510 first ascent in 1927 by Norman Clyde, named for Prof Charles Gayley
Eighth Prof at Cal

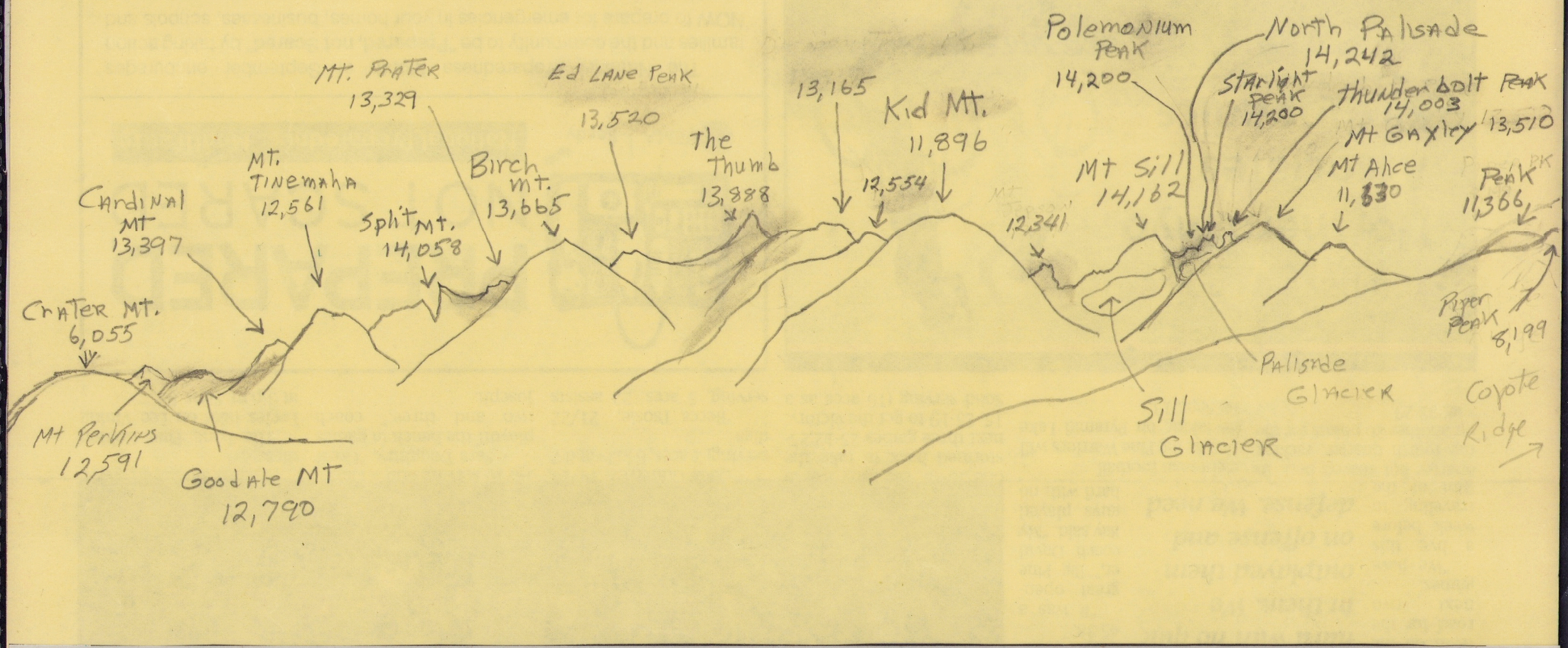
Temple Crag elev 12,999 first ascent in 1909 by U.S. Geological Survey

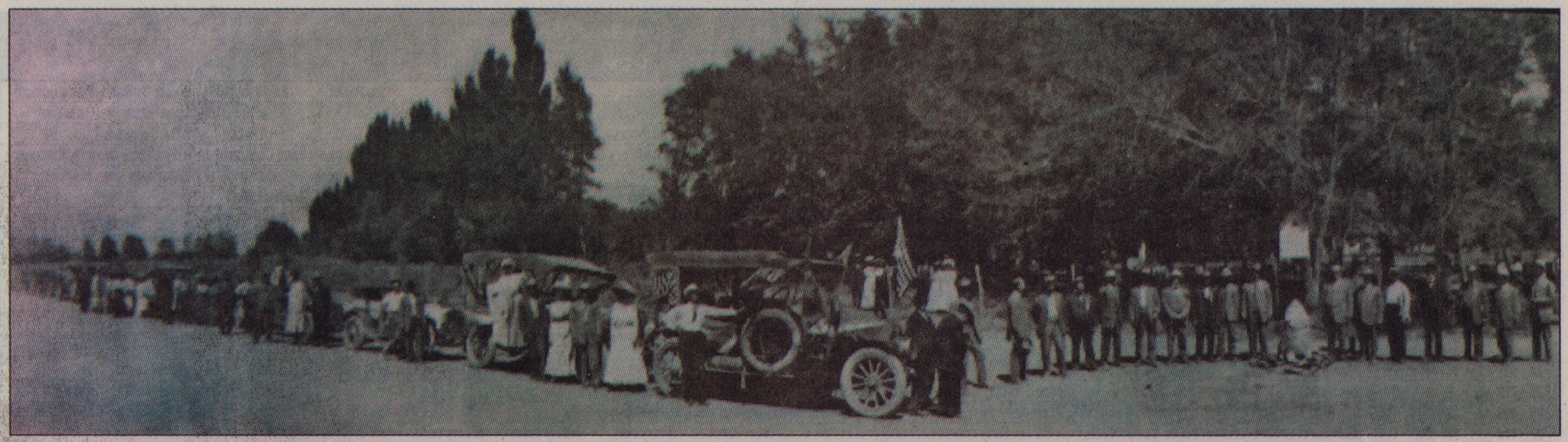
Mt Winchell elev 13,768 named for Geologist Alexander Winchell, first ascent in 1923
by W.B. Putnam, J.N. Newell + H.C. Mansfield

Mt Agassiz elev 13,891 named for Professor Louis Agassiz of Harvard, first
ascent in 1925 by Norman Clyde

Mt Alice elev 11,630 named for Mrs Alice Ober of Big Pine
Peak 11,366

Piper Pk elev 8,199 earlier name was Mohala Joe Peak, named for Samuel S Piper
~~who~~ homesteaded 2 miles west in 1912



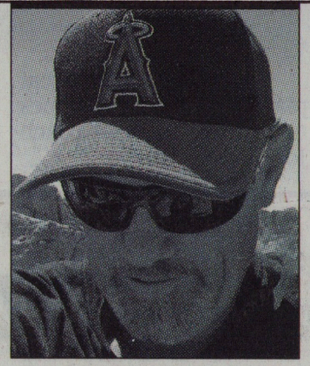


The entire Inyo Good Road Club membership is assembled in front of Fred Eaton's poultry ranch on Aug. 31, 1910, to celebrate the dedication of El Camino Sierra.

(Hiked on July 19, 2019)

Sometimes, trying to coordinate schedules and set up hikes with others can be quite exhausting. On the other hand, the payoff is always worth the time spent planning and preparing, and after numerous conversations and some last minute decision making, Sarah and I scheduled a hike for Friday, July 19.

We were both tired from busy work schedules, and not looking to do anything too difficult, but something with a great view of the mountains, canyons and sky. I knew the perfect spot for this, and that's where we headed just as the sun was rising. It was a very pleasant 15 minute drive from our homes in Bishop, and after a quick stop for snacks and beverages, we were on our way up Glacier Lodge road in Big Pine to the first trailhead to the North Fork. We luckily found an open spot in the very busy parking area, and before long we were headed up the trail.



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

It was an absolutely beautiful morning in our Eastern Sierra, with no clouds in sight and a cooling breeze touching our faces; a perfect combination to a successfully enjoyable day of hiking. Within 10 minutes of leaving the trailhead, we were already having a great time, both equally loving the view of the Palisades and discussing future adventures.

A little over a mile into our trek, Sarah and I left the North Fork Big Pine trail and turned right onto the seldom-used Baker Creek Trail. This took us uphill immediately, with one long switchback leading directly to the top of the ridge. The view from here looking down into the South Fork Big Pine, and up to the jagged peaks beyond, is truly spectacular. We stopped for a short break, took some cool photos, then descended slightly into a short canyon, before starting the climb to High Meadows.

For the next two and a half miles the trail winds its way through a thick forest known as Logging Flat. Over 100 years ago, the trees in this area were harvested and used down in the Owens Valley. Today, no trees are being cut down, instead the forest has grown back robustly and beautifully.

After a short break under a shady tree, Sarah took the lead and led us up the final moderately steep mile to a breathtaking spot for viewing mountains, known as High Meadows. We left the trail at the 4.5 mile mark and easily climbed to a jumble of rocks and boulders with the "best view in the house." We found two perfect "sittin' rocks" and planted ourselves there for the next two hours.

Time flew by as we marveled at the vista before us, from 14,242-foot North Palisade on the Sierra Crest to two of the azure blue lakes in the North Fork. It was pure paradise being in this spot and neither one of us wanted to leave, but the time had come to depart. The return back to the trailhead was as equally entertaining as the outbound, both of us vowing to hike together again very soon.

For the next two and a half miles the trail winds its way through a thick forest known as Logging Flat Over 100 years ago, the trees in this area were harvested and used down in the Owens Valley. Today, no trees are being cut down, instead the forest has grown back robustly and beautifully.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

Known as the most alpine region in the High Sierra, the Palisades have five summits that exceed 14,000 feet.

It was a short 30 minutes from my home in Bishop to the North Fork Big Pine trailhead, west of Big Pine on Glacier Lodge Road. It was a little after 7 a.m. and surprisingly there were a few cars already in the parking lot. My guess was these were backpackers

What a perfect start to a 9 mile round trip, with a 2,540-foot elevation gain, with white puffy clouds hovering near the high peaks, and a cool morning breeze rustling the leaves on the trees. It was looking to be a great day in the mountains, and it sure didn't disappoint. The hike started at the hiker parking lot east of the pack station (there's a second trailhead at the end of the road), gently rising on a moderate slope. I paused a few times to capture the view of fresh spring flowers bursting with color against the amazing backdrop of the Palisades, something that needs to be seen in person. The purple, red and yellow flowers in the foreground, with the huge cleft of the South Fork Big Pine behind, made this scene breathtakingly undescribable.

I followed the moderately steep terrain around a corner and into the north fork, where I immediately caught a glimpse of First Falls in the distance. The pleasant breeze prevented sweating up to this point but that would soon change abruptly. I caught up to the hiker I was talking to back at the trailhead and we continued our conversation for another moment. I'm proud to tell people I live in Bishop, it always seems to make them jealous! He headed up the north fork while I turned right on the Baker Creek Trail and hiked steeply to the top of the ridge. This is a great spot to check out the glaciers beneath Middle Palisade and Norman Clyde Peak to the west, still covered in snow from the March storms.

The trail descends from here before climbing uphill to an area known as Loggers Flat. In the 1880s this area was logged with the assistance of ox-towed wagons; nowadays it's a healthy forest with large trees all around. The trail steepens quickly in the woods, gaining over a thousand feet in the last mile and half, utilizing long switchbacks on a vegetated slope. Two and a half hours after leaving the parking area I arrived at High Meadows, a somewhat flat area with a rolling plateau and expansive 360 degree views. The air was a lot colder at 10,300 feet, with no trees to stop the wind, but the view of practically the entire Palisades made up for any discomfort.

I left the trail and continued hiking westward to a jumble of boulders that offered the best view imaginable. There's one rock that's best for sitting, and that's what I did for over an hour. It was pure bliss and I didn't want to leave, but it was time to go and off I went, back downhill all the way. 6-2-2018

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

(Hiked on May 31, 2019)

It's been a long, long time. Matter of fact, it seems like it's been years since my boots touched dirt on a trail in the Eastern Sierra. The massive amount of snow that fell this past winter in our beloved Sierra Nevada does not want to go away without a fight, and it feels like it's trying to hang on for as long as it can. Most of the Eastside trailheads start near 9,500 feet and that's practically the snow line at the present time. Therefore, day hikes in the High Sierra now will consist of some snow somewhere. But, there is a trailhead that begins lower than most, yet leads to some of the most dramatic scenery in the entire Sierra Nevada.

At 7,200 feet in elevation, west of Big Pine, is the trailhead that leads to the Big Pine Lakes in the north fork. I was very optimistic that Sarah and I would make it the 4.5 miles to Second Lake, but beyond that might be way too much snow than we wanted to deal with. With this in mind, we packed our backpacks as if we were in for quite a snow-filled adventure, below 14,000 foot peaks.

Sarah and I had a nice drive down to Big Pine on the morning of our very anticipated day of hiking, arriving at the backpacker's parking area just before 8 a.m. There were plenty of clouds filling the sky and a cold breeze blowing down canyon, but it wasn't winter anymore and the warmth of the sun would be our companion throughout the day.

Hiking straight up the slope on the snow-covered trail, Sarah and I were only a few feet from Second Lake.

Photo by Craig Jackson

Sarah, as usual, took the lead as we left the trailhead and started the gradual ascent into the North Fork Big Pine Canyon. We both marveled at the sight of Norman Clyde Peak and Middle Palisade up the south fork, but equally satisfying, our destination would be as majestic. The up-to-now snowless trail took us passed the Baker Creek junction at the 1.2 mile mark, then switchbacked up to First Falls and the entrance sign to John Muir Wilderness. The creek was raging loudly on our left-hand side, distorting our words and muffling our enlightening and humorous conversation. To this point, we had yet to see any snow on the trail, but that would soon change.

A little less than 3 miles into our hike, Sarah and I passed the old Lon Chaney cabin next to the creek, then began the last two miles up to Second Lake. It didn't take long for it to happen, as we hit the snow-line in a hurry. We paused for a moment to put on our microspikes, then continued happily up the completely snow-covered trail. It was a lot of fun with Sarah in the snow, while watching the clouds gather above.

Two hours and 15 minutes from the start, we climbed our last bluff and caught a fleeting glimpse of a partially iced-over Second Lake, and its well-known neighbor to the south, 12,999-foot Temple Crag. It felt great to be back at this spot and Sarah and I enjoyed every second of our hour-long stay there, vowing to return later in the year and visit all of the Big Pine Lakes.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

Beautiful turquoise water at picturesque Finger Lake.

Photo by Craig Jackson

Sierra Sojourns

Up the South Fork to Finger Lake

Mountain climbers from all over the world come to test their skills and abilities on the bevy of 13,000- to 14,000-foot peaks known as the Palisades. Great Sierra granite united with dependably nice summer weather lure many alpinists and technical climbers to the faces, ridges and peaks of these highly challenging and artistic mountains. Hikers have the opportunity to enjoy the splendid alpine scenery of the middle Palisades on the trail up the South Fork Big Pine Creek to Brainerd Lake and then a no-nonsense, gut-busting, straightforward off trail route to turquoise Finger Lake and beyond.

My brother was back in town recently and wanted to do a nice day-hike with some mileage, elevation gain and great views. The trailhead at Big Pine Creek is around 8,000 feet and the area is typically dry Eastern Sierra landscape dominated by sage brush and manzanita. The occasional Jeffrey pine dots the landscape at the beginning and helps remind you that you are in a national forest. The trail up the South Fork Big Pine covered all of my brother's requests, including a steep trail with incredible vistas and a sincerely scenic destination.

Finger Lake is a Sierra gem beneath the cathedral-like walls of Middle Palisade and Norman Clyde Peak. The aptly-named lake is flanked by granite cliffs and features a glacial-turquoise color emanating glacial fragments above.

The trailhead is in the mountains west of Big Pine near the remains of the long-gone Glacier Lodge. The campground and store remain open during the summer months. Start hiking beyond the locked gate next to the trailhead sign.

My brother and I started our hike early two weeks ago and had our boots on the trail at 7 a.m. From the trailhead at road's end, you go around the gate and walk next to Big Pine Creek on an old road next to some summer cabins. The road meanders mellowly and soon reaches a spot where the hiker's trail goes right, then left up to a switchback before reaching the bridge over First Falls. We paused here briefly watching First Falls tumble down to the valley below.

Just a few steps beyond the bridge there is a trail junction. The right fork goes uphill and then into North Fork Big Pine; we went straight ahead and began hiking up the gorgeous South Fork. The trail moderately gains elevation on a well-defined trail through sage brush, manzanita, pink Indian Paintbrush, yellow sulfur blossom and other pretty wildflowers.

Palisade Crest, Norman Clyde Peak and Middle Palisade filled the views as we hiked at a fast pace, crossing over an old road for the first 1.8 miles and eventually had to cross over South Fork Big Pine Creek.

The old log bridge that crossed over the creek is long gone so we had to rock-hop on the boulders at the crossing. In the morning, the creek was considerably higher and we had to leap from rock to rock but later in the day the water level had lowered, making the crossing quite simple.

Once across the creek, some level walking was enjoyed for a brief time before passing the John Muir Wilderness entry sign and then beginning the steep switchbacks up to the top of the ridge crest. Since we had started early, the switchbacks weren't as tough as they can be later in the hot, sun-drenched day.

The ascent renews with a vengeance at three miles from the trailhead just below the top of the headwall. We gratefully landed at the ridge crest at 3.6 miles and were treated with a dramatic and inspiring mountain panorama. At this spot, we took a well-deserved break and marveled at the up-close peaks of the Palisades, including Mount Sill, Disappointment Peak, The Thumb, Middle Pal and Norman Clyde Peak, to name a few. This is a truly magical spot.

If you've had enough uphill, this is a great turnaround spot. We, on the other hand, were ready to move on as we jumped back on the trail for a brief downhill before reaching Brainerd Lake's outlet creek.

We continued hiking through the forest and came upon a junction to Willow Lake at 4.2 miles. Another steep ascent was ahead in a lodgepole-shaded hillside. We hiked steeply on the trail nearing Finger Lake's vigorous outlet. We left the noisy creekside at 5.2 miles, passed a small pond and then one final push put us on the shore of Brainerd Lake at 5.7 miles from the trailhead.

We found a "comfortable" rock near the lake and discussed the final leg up to Finger Lake. I've hiked to Brainerd Lake in the past and knew there was a ducked use-trail above the north shore so that's where we headed. We followed sparsely-spread rocked ducks or cairns marking the use-trail up a scree, boulder and talus slope for 540 grueling, sweaty feet and emerged just above fabulous Finger Lake, 0.6 miles from Brainerd Lake.

After 6.3 miles and nearly 3,500-feet of climbing, we were in heaven at this incredible High Sierra lake. We found a small grassy area at the shore, took off our boots and cooled our dogs in the blue, cold delicious water. Two hours later, we started back down the trail discussing our great hike up the South Fork.

At a glance:

- 12.6 miles round trip to Finger Lake with about 3,500 feet elevation gain
- Tough hike, so be prepared and bring map
- Many mosquitoes near water; bring plenty of repellent
- Apply sunscreen often and generously
- Wildflowers provide photo ops
- Camping and peak-bagging challenges above Finger Lake

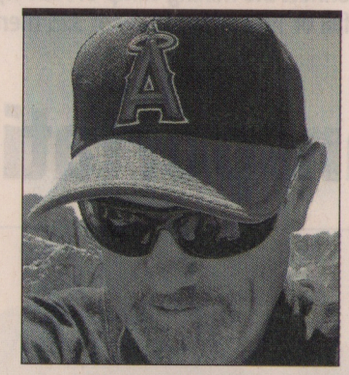
Third time's a charm for Piper Peak

(Hiked on April 11, 2015)

Lying just east of the Sierra Nevada and north of the Mojave Desert, the Owens Valley is one of the least known and thus most underrated places for vacationing in the great state of California.

U.S. Highway 395 is one of California's great scenic routes, skimming the edge of the Mojave and climbing up the Owens Valley and into the Eastern Sierra as it cuts into Nevada. Still two lanes in some spots, the road passes through groves of spiky Joshua trees, quirky desert outposts and incredible volcanic displays. It's the only highway in the country where you can drive in a desert between two opposing mountain ranges of 14,000-foot peaks.

Most visitors driving along U.S. Highway 395 don't notice Big Pine and its roughly 1,800 residents residing at an elevation of 3,989 feet, because they are usually going south to Southern California or north to Mammoth Lakes and beyond. There's not much happening in Big Pine and that's how the residents like it. Personally, I always get a little anxious and excited when I get close to Big Pine because I know that just a few miles west of town are some of the best trails, peaks, glaciers and creeks in the entire Sierra Nevada. To the east are the White Mountains and access to some of the oldest living trees on the entire planet.



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

Between U.S. Highway 395 and the Palisade region of the Sierra Nevada are some beautiful rolling hills that have some wonderful geology as well great hiking and off-roading opportunities. My goal last Saturday, after two previous failed attempts, was to summit Piper Peak (8,199 feet), the prominent rounded mountain just six miles west of downtown Big Pine and clearly visible from the highway. There is a Jeep road that gets within a couple of miles of the summit, but you still must hike cross-country up-and-down to reach the top. I parked far away at Arc Road and Baker Creek, making for a long, uphill battle to the summit on a windy day.

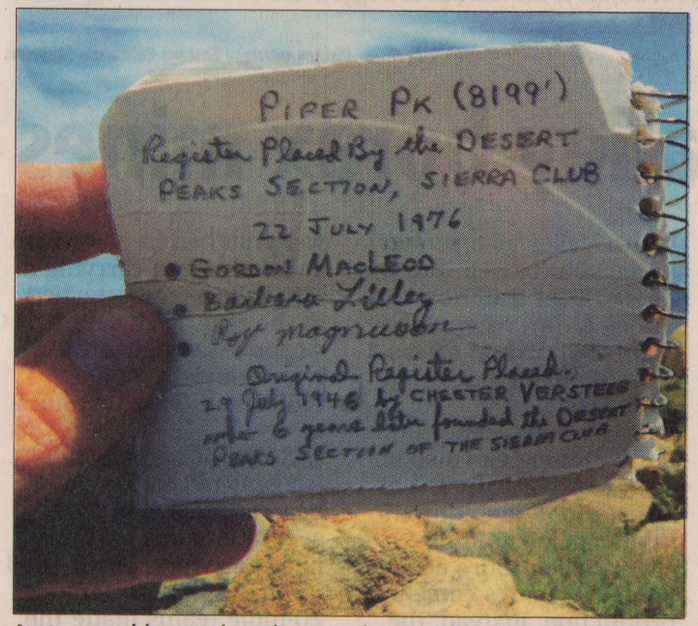
I reached the trailhead, for my third attempt at Piper Peak, by heading south from Bishop for 15 miles and then making a right on Crocker Avenue. I turned right onto paved Sugarloaf Road after 1.6 miles from U.S. Highway 395. After 0.6 miles, I turned right onto Arc Road, a graded dirt road. I drove a couple of miles on the well-graded dirt road, crossed over the Baker Creek culvert and parked in the small dirt turnout next to the old cattle fence.

There are a few ways to reach the summit of Piper Peak, none that are easy or are on a maintained trail. For this particular hike, I chose to stay on the road as far as I could before starting the cross-country. I left my car at 8:15 a.m. and started hiking next to Baker Creek before turning at the first right towards Warren Bench.

I passed through a flat area, and after a mile, started the steep uphill hiking while turning west. Piper Peak is always visible and at times, looks so far away. More steep uphill hiking on the road, combined with a stiff breeze, made the trip more memorable.

About three miles into the hike and 2,000 feet above Big Pine, I noticed an older orange Jeep slowly approaching me on the lonely road. The driver stopped next to me and asked if I'd hiked all the way up from Baker Creek and after I said "yes," the male passenger said I was a "warrior" for hiking all this way. Suffice to say, the hit song from Scandal in 1984, by the same name, played over and over in my head the rest of the day. Those two men would be the only humans I would see all day.

I watched the Jeep drive slowly, but steadily, up the steep, sandy road and with-



A 39-year-old summit register on the top of Piper Peak.

in a few minutes was completely out of sight. The relentless climbing continued for another mile until I decided to leave the road and hike straight up to the peak, not knowing what was in store ahead.

I started off heading in a southwest direction aiming straight for Piper Peak. On a previous attempt, I got to this point but didn't make it all the way due to an earlier technical error. I trudged upward for about a half-mile and encountered a ravine that I had to descend 200 feet down before the final climb to the summit, so I thought. At treeline now, I started straight up the steep gully, falling back in spots due to the scattered pine cones, loose dirt and rocks. By far, the funnest part of the day.

Within a few minutes and at 8,000 feet, I was on the ridge and staring directly at the summit of Piper Peak. After six miles of hiking and more than 4,000 feet of elevation gain, the summit was clearly in full view, just a short ridge hike to the top. The sweeping views west towards the Sierra Nevada were breathtaking and after a short break, I started the final push. I headed for the west ridge, and after climbing over some large boulders and in and out of some thick vegetation, I emerged at the summit of Piper Peak at 12:10 p.m. The cold wind was relentless on the summit but that didn't bother me. I endured while spending roughly an hour loitering around the summit, enjoying a well-earned ham, mayo and onion sandwich, sliced apples and my orange Hi-C punch. There is a small summit register on top, placed in 1976 by the famous peak-bagging duo of Gordon McLeod and Barbara Lilley, in an old glass jar with a rusted top. There is also a small tin canister inside the jar with signatures from the 1940s, '50s, '70s and up to the last entry in November of 2014.

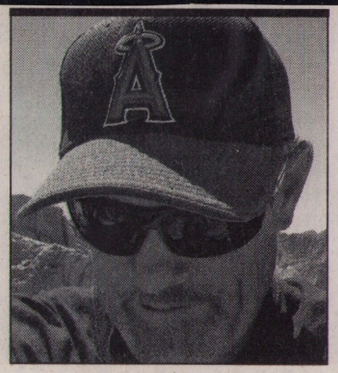
There are different ways to descend from Piper Peak but I chose to head back down a different way, making this a loop hike. I took the road down through the Boulder Patch and eventually met up with Baker Creek. I got back to my car at 4:30 p.m. and turned back to look at Piper Peak with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, knowing I can check it off my list.

At a glance:

- 12 miles round trip, 4,600-foot elevation gain
- Excellent sweeping vistas of the Palisades from the summit
- Can be warm at trailhead and cold at 8,199-foot summit
- Jeep road access can make it a much shorter hike
- Short after-hike drive to Big Pine for refreshments and BBQ

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

Hiking, walking and wandering



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

Recently I've read some articles asking what the difference is between a walk and a hike.

Personally, I could care less to get involved in the discussion but what I've learned from reading is that a hike is longer than a walk. A walk to me feels more like exercise and something that may be slightly forced, while a hike is more of a planned adventure that happens less often. One of the best forms of activity for the human body is walking, basically getting off of the couch and enjoying what we have here in our area.

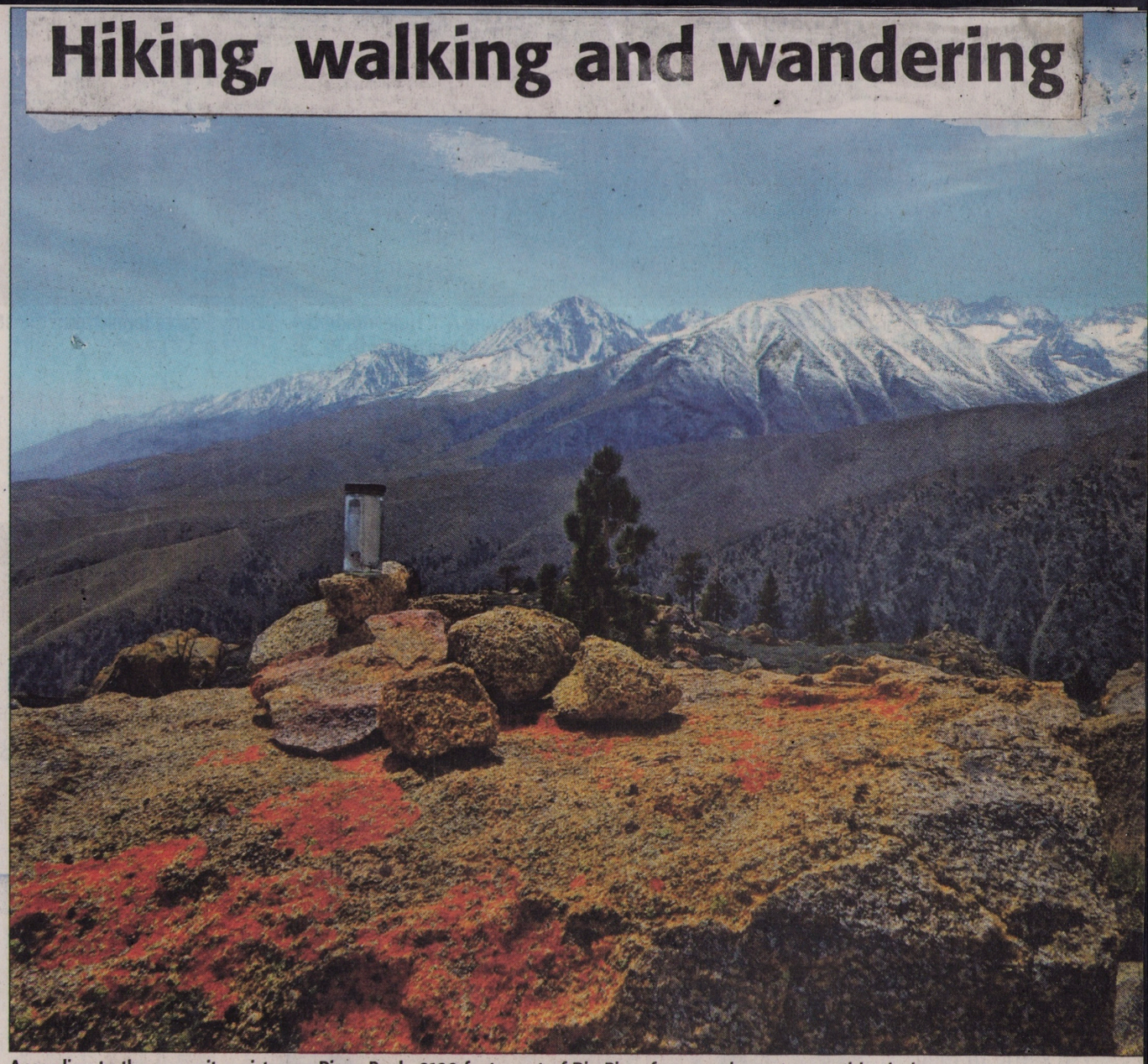
What about wandering? Wandering is kind of a somewhat planned hike but is more like a walk in its sense of difficulty. Here in the Eastern Sierra there are a multitude of great places for all of these types of leg motion. In my ancient "Doubleday Dictionary," a hike is described as "A journey on foot; a long walk." Sure is a vague definition, while wandering is said "To travel about without destination or purpose; to roam." A walk is defined as "To go on foot for exercise or enjoyment." Whatever the definitions of these words are it really doesn't matter because just being outside is a bonus.

I wouldn't say I do much walking per se, even though when I'm hiking or wandering, it seems to me that all I'm doing is walking. But when I'm on a rocky trail that ascends steeply up to a peak or lake, this to me can only be described as hiking. For instance, if I started in the morning at the Mosquito Flat Trailhead and ended 14 miles later at the Pine Creek Trailhead, this all-day adventure would include a ton of walking, but this outing can only be described as a great hike.

On the other hand, wandering was defined as a unplanned adventure, which I disagree with. I spend many hours wandering in places such as North and South Round Valley, as well as Buttermilk Country and the hills west of Big Pine, to name a couple, and every time I plan the starting point ahead of time. After that, it's anybody's ball game and anything is possible and anywhere is a destination.

There are no designed trails for hiking in Round Valley but there are miles of easy walking between the pointy vegetation that makes for a great day outside. You never know what you might find out there. If anything, the views of Mount Tom and Wheeler Crest are outstanding.

Another great spot to explore without a "plan" are the hills west of Big Pine. This was one of my first wandering areas I discovered when I moved to Bishop three years ago and I try to get out near Baker Creek as much as possible, especially this time of year.



According to the summit register on Piper Peak, 8199 feet, west of Big Pine, few people venture to this glorious spot.

Photo by Craig Jacks

3-4-2017

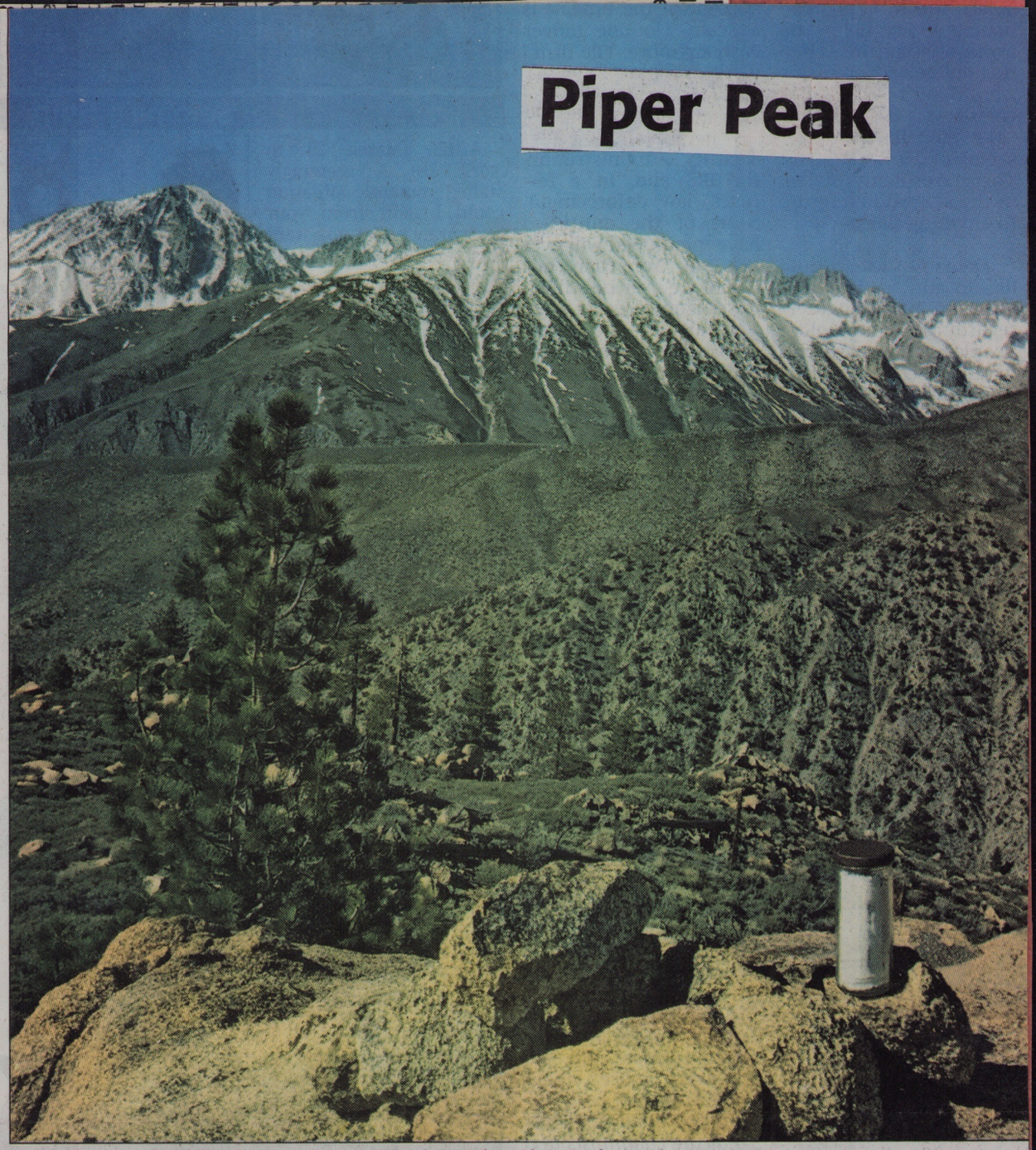
The highlight for me in this area is climbing to the top of Piper Peak, where the wind seems to blow a little cooler and the air feels a little crisper. The road that runs next to Baker Creek and up to Warren Bench and the Boulder Patch is a perfect start to a full day of wandering, with easy navigation.

Whether it's a hike, walk or just plain wandering, nothing can make your body feel better than getting outside and putting one foot in front of the other.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

Piper Peak



Looking west to the Palisades from the summit of 8,199-foot Piper Peak.

(Hiked on May 5, 2020)

It had almost been five years to the day since I first stood on the summit of Piper Peak, and earlier this month I was back on top. Visible from Big Pine and the Owens Valley, Piper Peak stands at an elevation of 8,199 feet and the all around views from its rocky summit are spectacular. According to the dates of the signatures in the summit register, this peak doesn't get climbed often during the hotter months. Although the top has some tall trees, the approach is virtually shadeless and hot for the first few miles. For this reason I was at my chosen trailhead parking spot at 6 a.m.

It took the usual 15 minutes to drive from my home in Bishop down to Big Pine, where I turned right at the Shell gas station. From there, I drove a few miles up the road before turning right on signed Sugarloaf Road, then a quick right on Arc Road. The pavement turned to dirt right away as I entered an open plain, heading towards Baker Creek. A mile later I crossed the creek, passed an old wooden fence post and parked in an open spot on the right. I could see my objective standing tall to the west and it didn't look too far away, but looks can be very deceiving.

It was a cool morning in the Sierra foothills west of Big Pine and I was incredibly excited about the day ahead of me. I started out hiking on the main road for less than a mile before turning right towards Warren Bench, a wide open area with rising hills to the east and west. I then passed what appeared to be an old homestead foundation structure, then took the vague dirt road on the left that heads straight up.

Due to the lack of tire tracks in the dirt, it was obvious that the road I was on sees very few vehicles. Perfect for hiking. Within an hour I had gone up and over two small hills, through a trailess flat area and met up with the main dirt road that heads up to the top of the ridge and Glacier View. This is where the real uphill battle began

It was still only 7:30 in the morning, but due to the lack of shade, it was starting to warm up nicely. I marched onward and upward with not another human in sight for miles. It was an ideal situation for me out there, and I could see Piper Peak straight ahead. At some point it would be necessary for me to leave the road and continue cross country towards the summit.

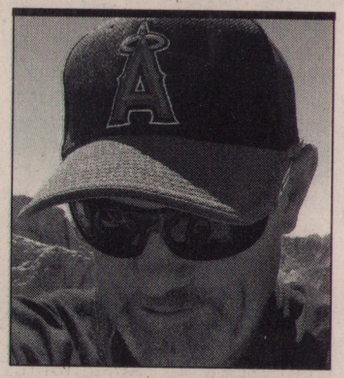
Since I had climbed this peak before and taken basically the same route to the top, I knew exactly where to leave the road. Initially, I followed a dry wash uphill, between two huge boulders, gaining a subsidiary ridge in less than 30 minutes. Unfortunately, I had to drop down a couple hundred feet, but the good news was I had reached treeline and some very welcome shade. This is where I took a very short break before the final push to the summit.

The rest of the way was by far the best part of the hike. I happily wandered uphill through the forest, reaching a delightful plateau less than a mile from my goal. From here I could see the high peaks of the Sierra Nevada to the west. It was my paradise. I turned south and finally landed on the summit ridge, which was dotted with large boulders and prickly vegetation.

The summit block was now within reach, all I had to do was find a way to the top. I climbed over a few smaller boulders on the north side, in between car size rocks and lifted my body up to the actual summit. Pure exhilaration! I found the old summit register, signed it for the second time in five years and took my longest break of the day. Believe it or not it was actually quite cool up there, but that didn't

A hike to a peak and a creek

(Hiked in the past)



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

The hills between Big Pine and the massive escarpment of the Sierra Nevada are packed full of great hiking roads, as well as easy off-road navigation over minor peaks and next to crystal clear creeks. As mentioned in last week's column, the area west of Big Pine offers great hiking opportunities with an extreme difference in terrain. At the south end of Big Pine lies the Big Pine Volcanic Field with Crater Mountain as the highest point and other smaller craters to the south. The north end is a more dusty area with dirt and rocks, accompanied by gigantic boulders with trees near the 8,000-foot mark. I've enjoyed many wonderful days exploring quietly alone on all sides of Big Pine, but this time the day was spent hiking southwest to an unknown creek and a peak below Birch Mountain (13,665 feet).

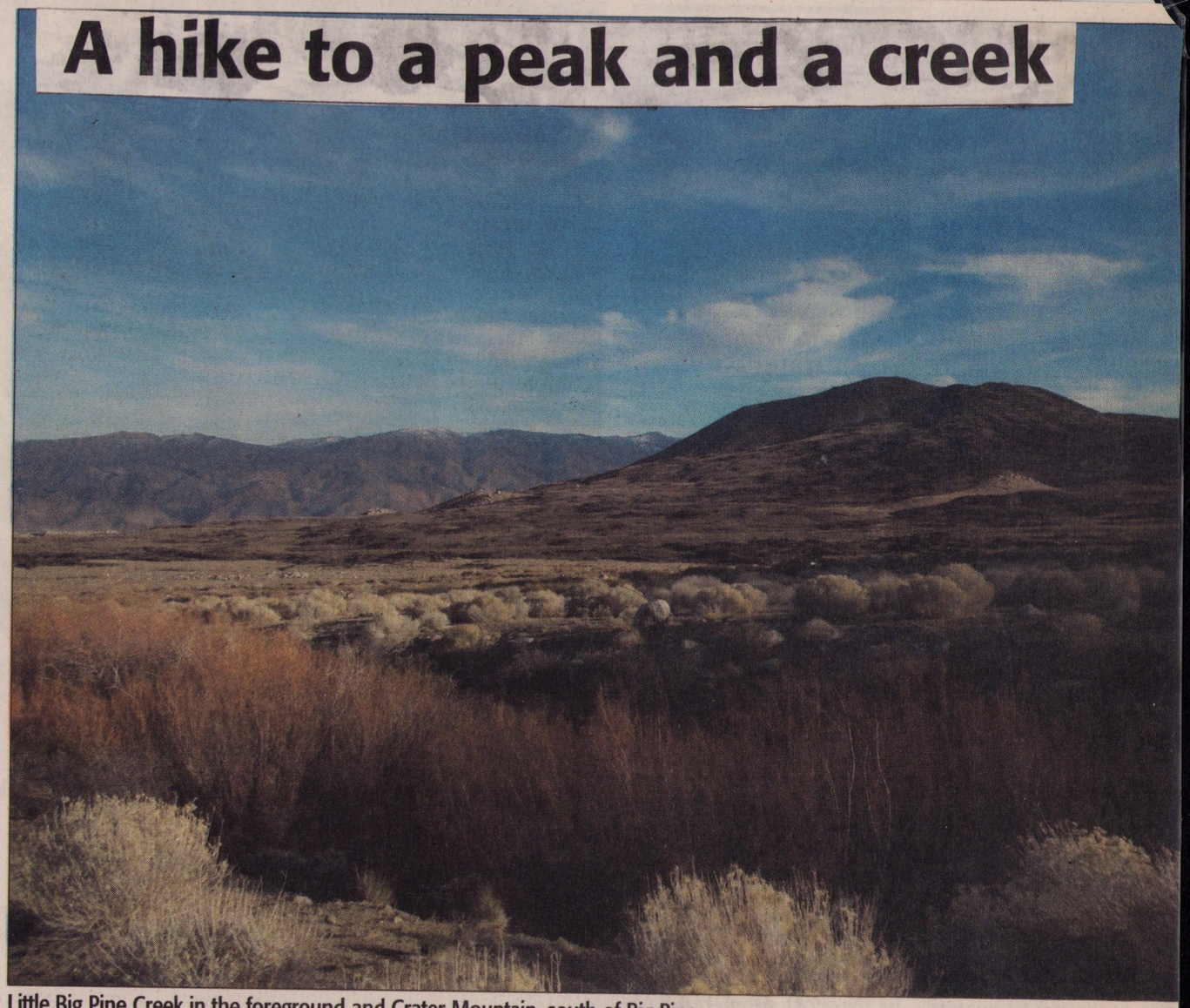
After a nice 15-minute drive from Bishop I arrived in downtown Big Pine where I turned right on Crocker Avenue, drove through a quiet neighborhood before turning left on signed McMurray Meadows Road. I immediately parked in an open spot, prepared my backpack and started up on the road to the right (9s113), not McMurray Meadows, which travels to the left and crosses over Little Big Pine Creek. It then heads out deep into the Big Pine Volcanic Field to trailheads that lead to Crater Mountain and Birch Lake.

The road I took traverses on the north side of Little Big Pine Creek, through the rocks of the alluvial fan for a mile or so before crossing Little Big Pine Creek and starting up a road in a dry side canyon. Little Big Pine Creek Canyon from here becomes narrower and steeper and includes a road that ends quickly at an impassable point. Only deer tracks were seen going up the rocky canyon. Looked interesting but the terrain got very prickly with limited access to the ground.

Immediately after crossing the creek (tricky on foot), there's a small concrete foundation to what used to be a building of some sort on the right side of the road. I stayed on the road as it slowly ascended for a mile up to a point where it crossed a ridge and dropped down again. Instead of descending the road I jumped off and started up the ridgeline, topping out a half mile later. The flat ridge top is a perfect spot to either turn around or take a break because the view to the west of Birch Mountain, The Thumb, Middle Palisade and Split Mountain will literally take your breath away – another one of those supreme Eastern Sierra vistas.

After a refreshing break with a great view, I hiked to the top of the ridge then descended to a pleasant pasture with grass, a small spring and a surprising creek nestled in the deep vegetation. All of this made for an idyllic setting with an old road that ran down the middle of the meadow. But I was more interested in the peak 500 feet above.

There were three options I could see to climbing this peak and I chose the shortest, steepest route directly in front of me. It took 15 minutes to reach the summit ridge and a couple of more to arrive at the top. It was a glorious setting and the cool breeze dried the sweat off my head and arms. I spent at least an hour up there before starting back, downhill all the way.



Little Big Pine Creek in the foreground and Crater Mountain, south of Big Pine.

Photo by Craig Jac

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having rel cated here in 2013 from Southern California. Ema him at Sierracj51@gmail. com.)

(Hiked on Dec. 3, 2019)

I knew my friend Sarah's birthday was the first week of December and to my surprise she asked me if I would hike with her on that special day. Of course, I said absolutely yes emphatically. It had snowed quite a bit the two days before our hike, covering the mountains and Owens Valley with a fresh few inches of the white stuff. This definitely limited our options for a hike, but that didn't stop us from going outdoors and enjoying her birthday in the snow.

The amount of snow on the ground in Bishop that morning eliminated any type of hike in the Sierra, so we had to come up with a spot where the snow wouldn't be too deep. I wanted to take her somewhere she'd never been before, a special hike for both of us to remember. I recalled a hike I did a few years ago near Big Pine that was not far from town on a dirt road to a cool pasture and an unnamed peak, and that's exactly where we went.

Sarah posing on her birthday in front of Birch Mountain and the Sierra Nevada.

Photo by Craig Jackson

I picked the birthday girl up ay 8 a.m. here in Bishop and we hit the road immediately, heading south on U.S. Highway 395 towards Big Pine. Sarah was her usual crazy funny self on the 20-minute drive to our trailhead, which was a parking spot in the dirt near McMurry Meadows Road, a couple of miles up Glacier Lodge Road from the west end of Big Pine. There was snow everywhere, but the good news was it wasn't too deep yet and fairly easy to walk on.

Our route was a dirt road on the west side of Little Big Pine Creek that took us in a southwest direction for a mile or so, then entering a canyon that ascended to a ridge. We were having a great conversation while the snow began to get a little deeper (6 to 8 inches). We left the road at the ridge and climbed straight up it, around large snow-covered sage brush and on top of well-defined deer tracks.

It was getting tougher hiking in the almost-foot-deep snow at this point, but we could see our destination and it wasn't very far away, across a small pasture and up a steep slope to our birthday peak. We were having way too much fun to care about the snow, laughing and singing while somewhat struggling.

We made it nicely across the pasture and then the real fun began, with less than a mile to the top of our peak and the deepest snow of the day. She and I both took the lead at this point, pushing each other while stomping our way through knee to thigh deep snow, climbing higher uphill with each and every giant step.

Halfway up the slope Sarah spotted a small herd of mule deer purposely heading off in the opposite direction. It was a stunning sight seeing them leap high in the air in the snow, a memory we both agreed we'd never forget. Soon thereafter we made the summit ridge and soon planted ourselves on the summit rocks.

The view was absolutely spectacular, we were within shouting distance of 13,665-foot Birch Mountain and dozens of miles of snow-covered terrain, including the entire Owens Valley. It was quite a sight on this special day. We talked for what seemed like hours up there while enjoying some cool beverages and birthday candy. The fun continued back down the peak and through the small meadow as we retraced our boot prints all the way back to the car, both equally happy to spend her day together.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@

Beautiful day near Baker Creek

I took off from Bishop about mid-morning and headed south on U.S. Highway 395 for 15 miles to Big Pine. I then turned right on Crocker Avenue and drove slowly west through the residential neighborhood. Crocker Avenue turns into Glacier Lodge Road outside of town and in a couple of miles I turned right onto Sugar Loaf Road. Less than a mile farther, I made a right on Arc Road and then crossed over a culvert before turning into the large dirt area on the left. Arc Road continues on and is nice dirt road until it crosses over Baker Creek in a mile. There's a couple of nice turnouts near Baker Creek, where I've parked before, so your options are open.

The surrounding area was blanketed with about three inches of snow as the sun was shining brightly and a cold breeze blowing. I got all bundled up in my gloves, beanie and scarf then started out westbound across an open field stomping through the fresh snow.

Initially, I was going to do a couple of small peaks above the school where I've seen deer before, but instead I deviated from that plan and hiked over a couple of hills towards Baker Creek and Warren Bench. I've hiked up here a few times now and love the quiet solitude and great views these hills have to offer.

After a half hour of stomping through the snow, I made it to Baker Creek and jumped onto the road. There were a few tire tracks in the snow but no one I could see ahead of me. The sound of Baker Creek on my left and a nice breeze rustling the leaves made this level stretch extremely gratifying as I elected to continue straight ahead at the Coyote junction.

The road gets more and more rougher as it gets further west, evidenced by the lack of tire tracks and the increasing number of deer hoof prints. There are a couple of places to park if you make it here via four-wheel drive.

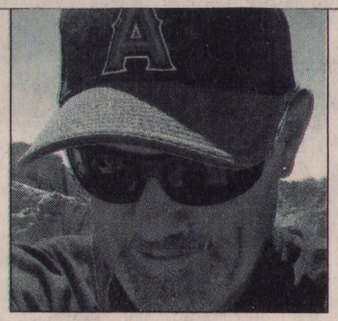
Completely covered in snow, the road was great for hiking alongside Baker Creek as the canyon became narrower. I got to the very end of the road and started cross country up Baker Creek Canyon but the terrain and the snow made it difficult. Instead, I started straight up towards some huge boulders and the top of the ridge.

Reaching the ridge line about 500 feet above Baker Creek, the views opened up to Big Pine and the White Mountains. I rock-hopped and maneuvered in and out of the boulders along the horseshoe-shaped ridge line, having the time of my life. I had lots of fun on this part of the hike until I found what I was looking for, an old jeep road.

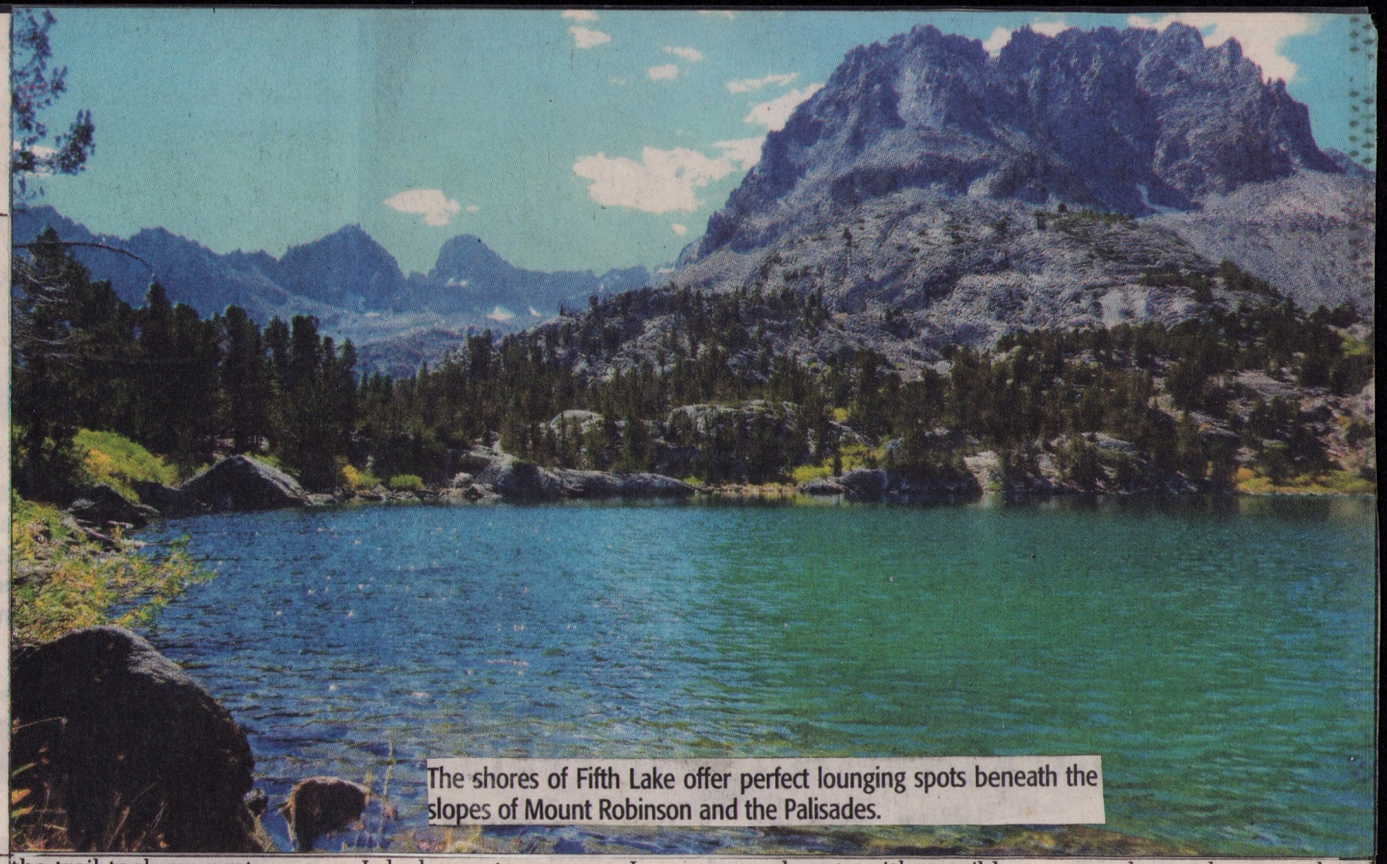
I found a great group of boulders to hang out at, eating my lunch and thoroughly enjoying the views, snow and delightful winter breeze. After lunch I took off steeply downhill on the jeep track, wading in three-foot snowdrifts along the way. Man that was fun! Before long I was back at Baker Creek and soon thereafter, back at my car. Picked up some ribs at Copper Top before heading back home to Bishop, satisfied with the days adventure.

On the ridge above Baker Creek looking towards the high peaks of the Sierra Nevada.

Seven lakes on a loop



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST



The shores of Fifth Lake offer perfect lounging spots beneath the slopes of Mount Robinson and the Palisades.

It is a fact that sometimes certain words are required to describe sights seen by one person to others who aren't able to see them. How many different words are there in the English language that help depict a High Sierra alpine lake surrounded by dramatically massive peaks under a partly cloudy sky? Words like "beautiful" and "incredible" seem to characterize just about anything anymore and "amazing" can apply to a dramatic natural scene or a new type of cell phone.

Everything seen while hiking a trail in the Sierra Nevada is called "breathtaking" and "magnificent" by all, when in fact it actually is the true definition of these words.

One of these places that truly defines and represents these adjectives is the north fork of Big Pine Creek. The lakes and streams, as well as the trees and mountains definitely deserve to be called beautiful and amazing!

The more than 14,000-foot-tall Palisades are the backdrop to a staircase of magnificent lakes colored in different shades of blue. I've been to First and Second Lakes a number of times now but this would be only the third time to venture to the upper, more pristine lakes on a 12-mile loop hike.

The trailhead is west of Big Pine at the terminus of Glacier Lodge Road at an elevation of 7,760 feet. My initial plan was to do the entire 14 mile loop and see nine lakes but I would end up spending too much time in one spot, therefore shortening the trip to seven amazing lakes in 12 glorious miles.

I parked in the very busy hikers parking lot at 7:30 a.m. and was greeted by perfect blue skies and a gentle morning breeze, a good sign of things to come. The loop hike requires a 3000-foot elevation gain but it's over a number of miles, making the ascent portions very moderate and quite enjoyable.

I chose to start this hike at the hikers parking area near the pack station instead of the alternate trailhead at the end of the road for one reason, the view! As soon as my boots hit the trail shortly after 7:30 a.m., my jaw dropped for the first time seeing Middle Palisade, Norman Clyde Peak and the Palisade Crest. The trail skirts the east side of the north fork of Big Pine Canyon gaining elevation gently before reaching the turnoff to Baker Creek at the 1.7 mile mark. The next half mile of the trail took me past Second Falls and into level terrain in a spot known as Cienaga Mirth. I always love getting to this spot because of two reasons: first is the level trail and second, it enters a stretch of trail shaded by colorful aspen trees.

I pulled into the Lon Chaney cabin and took my normal break on the front door steps, facing the creek and taking a bite of the egg and cheese burrito I picked up at Manor Market earlier. The hiking resumed shortly climbing on the rocky trail never too far from the creek, arriving at the turnoff for Black Lake at 4.5 miles and the beginning of the loop.

The zigzagging steep switchbacks to Black Lake seemed to fly by as the view down to First and Second Lake began to open up. I reached the saddle below Black Lake in more than a mile and breathed a huge sigh of relief, while entering a shaded forest and easy walking. The trail took me around the left side of Black Lake before beginning more uphill to Fourth Lake. The scene due south of the 14,000-foot peaks of the Palisades is somewhat intimidating but truly awe-inspiring.

At roughly six miles from the trailhead I came to a four-way signed junction; right to Summit Lake, Sixth and Seventh Lake, straight ahead to Fifth Lake or left to Third Lake and the continuation of the loop. It was still early and I had enough energy so I hung a right and headed toward Summit Lake.

Great choice, this lake was a beauty with possibly the best view of Mount Sill and North Palisade, both over 14,000 feet.

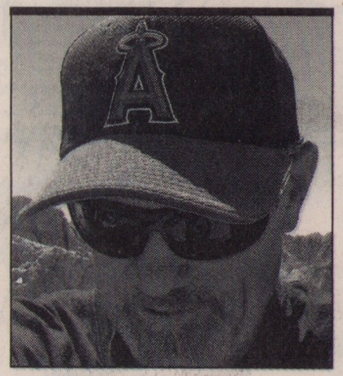
Back at the aforementioned four-way junction, my feet turned right for the pleasantly short walk to Fifth Lake, another great decision. This is perhaps my favorite lake even though it's small. It packs in the scenery and also has some great spots at the shore for lounging and relaxing. During a short siesta in the grass I heard some voices and looked up to see a backpacking couple a few yards away. We started talking and come to find out they live in Sunset Beach, approximately three miles from where I spent the previous 20 years. We reminisced for quite a long time while they decided where to camp for the night, either near the creek or on a benc above the lake. I left them to their pondering and started back for the four-way junction. With so much time spent at Fifth Lake, I bypassed Sixth and Seventh Lakes this time and turned right toward Third Lake.

"All downhill from here" was a perfect statement for the remainder of the hike a I passed Third, Second and First Lakes before concluding the loop back at the junction to Black Lake. The last 4.5 miles was a breeze, full of thoughts about places I had visited earlier.

(Craig Jackson is a Bisho resident and avid hiker/bac packer who enjoys explorin his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

Fifth might be the finest of the Big Pine Lakes

(Hiked on July 14, 2017)



CRAIG JACKSON
COLUMNIST

It's definitely a matter of opinion and personal preference, but to ask someone to pick their favorite of the nine Big Pine Lakes is downright ludicrous. To say "this" lake is better than "that" one, or the other one isn't as pretty as this one, is perfectly ridiculous. Each lake has its own different style and beauty, as well as color, contrast and background beauty. For instance, Second Lake has the impressive east face of 12,999-foot Temple Crag behind and the aqua color from glacial runoff. Also, Third Lake is similar in color but the backdrop of Temple Crag's north face and the even higher 13,510-foot Mount Gayley behind, makes it slightly more impressive.

Unlike First, Second and Third lakes, the rest of the chain is not glacial fed, therefore they have a darker tone but they're higher in elevation with seemingly endless vistas and beautifully flowered shorelines. The North Fork of Big Pine Canyon draws the majority of hikers over the South Fork, due in part to the nine mouth-watering lakes that make up the Big Pine Lakes and the special views of some 14,000-foot peaks in the Palisade Region. This is the highest neighborhood I've been in recently and the actual size of these mountains is something that is difficult to explain, must be seen. Add in the sound of a raging North Fork Big Pine Creek and this spot is truly pure paradise.

Just two months ago on Cinco de Mayo I strode up the trail for 3 miles to the old Lon Chaney cabin and encountered a lot of snow, so I decided last Friday to try it again. It was another early start as I pulled into the hiker parking area at 5:30 a.m. off Glacier Lodge Road a few miles west of Big Pine. The lot was practically full of cars with people preparing themselves for some type of outdoor adventure. I'm really enjoying these early morning starts, especially when there's tons of shade in the beginning and not too many folks out on the trail.

The plan for the day started out as a 4.5-mile hike to Second Lake and from there check my energy levels and push on or stop there and turn around. It ended up being a lot more than that (14 miles round trip, 3,000-foot gain) on a perfect Sierra Nevada Friday. The hike started near the Glacier Pack Train outfit at 7,700 feet shortly after arriving at the parking area. I prefer this trailhead over the one at the end of the road for one reason, the view!

The perfectly sublime north shore of Fifth Lake with Mt. Robinson on the right and the Palisades behind.

The trail passes a junction to Baker Creek and High Meadows at the 1.8-mile mark then negotiates a couple of switchbacks to the John Muir Wilderness sign at 2 miles. This is the spot where I met up with N.F. Big Pine Creek, entered Cienaga Mirth, "Merry Marsh" in Spanish, and within a mile I was standing at the snow-free Lon Chaney cabin. I didn't stay for more than two minutes before resuming climbing up the trail with a constantly expanding view of the jagged peaks ahead.

At the 4-mile mark I had to make a decision, either go straight to First, Second and Third lakes or right to Black Lake. I went straight and arrived at greenish-blue Second Lake and without hesitation I continued on to my favorite lake in the entire chain, Fifth Lake. On other hikes up here I've visited Summit, Sixth and Seventh lakes but always seem to go straight to my favorite resting spot at Fifth Lake.

Beyond Second Lake and past Third, it is no easy task getting to Fifth as the trail climbs quite steeply – 600 feet – until reaching an unsigned 4-way intersection.

I hung a left and within .03 miles I was in the shade on the northeast shore of incredible Fifth Lake. I took my usual spot next to this orange-ish flat rock and whittled the time away for the next two hours. With Two Eagle Peak on the right, Mt. Robinson to the south and the Palisades behind, Fifth Lake is truly a magical spot. Feeling re-energized after two healthy snacks, I took the loop back past Bla Lake and was back at the trailhead at 2:30 p.m. and ordering a sampler platter from Copper Top at 2:54 p

(Craig Jackson is a Bisho resident and avid hiker/bac packer who enjoys explorin his new backyard after hav relocated here in 2013 fron Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail. com.)

I pulled into the parking area at the trailhead, near the deserted pack station, at 8 a.m., being the only vehicle in the lot by the way, and I was immediately on the trail. It was a perfect, cloudless late October morning and I had the whole trail to myself. The sun had yet to light up the South Fork Big Pine Canyon but I could still see the brilliant fall colors next to the creek below. It was a little hazy but that didn't stop me from taking some pictures for the first mile before turning north into the North Fork Big Pine Canyon.

As I approached the turnoff for the Baker Creek Trail, I was stunned by the shear beauty of the colorful aspen trees lining the creek below and up the steep slope to the west. I was completely alone in the entire canyon, steeply climbing up the trail to the top of the ridge, with incredible views up the magnificent South Fork Big Pine to the glaciers below Middle Palisade and Norman Clyde Peak. Hiking next to a massive boulder wall to the north, the trail dips for a moment before rounding a curve and reaching what is called Logging Flat. According to Sharon Giacomazzi, there was a logging operation here back in the 1880s, where ox teams dragged the logs downhill to a wagon road in the canyon. It's amazing that that type of operation existed here some 130 years ago, seemingly impossible but true.

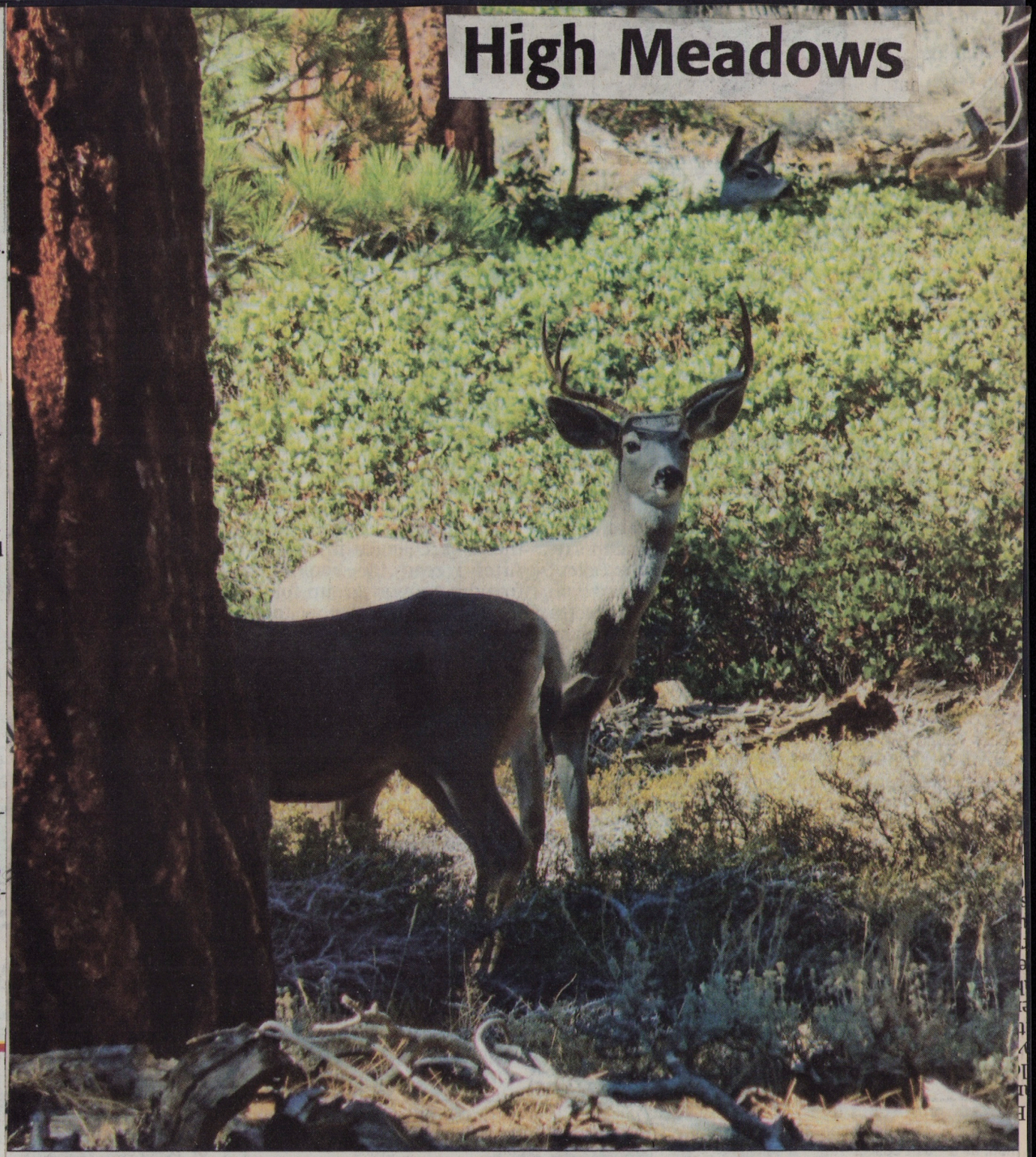
Still climbing, the trail undulates through the forest until emerging on a brush covered slope, a mile and a half from High Meadows. The silence was interrupted substantially when I heard some rustling up the trail amidst the trees. I first saw a mule deer doe staring at me, then all of a sudden a dozen other deer ran off abruptly in all directions. After the dust had cleared, one lone buck was standing majestically in the forest while the sun seemingly shone on him and him alone. It lasted for only a few seconds but was something I'll never forget.

The views immediately started opening up the closer I got to the top, seeing all the peaks of the Palisades from south to north. Split Mountain and Middle Palisade to the south with Mt. Sill and North Palisade in the north, all eclipsing the magical 14,000 foot mark. I sat on a familiar rock overlooking the north fork, catching a glimpse of First Lake below Temple Crag, a small blue dot in a endless sea of nature's landscape.

(Craig Jackson is a Bishop resident and avid hiker/backpacker who enjoys exploring his new backyard after having relocated here in 2013 from Southern California. Email him at Sierracj51@gmail.com.)

Carl's Jr.

High Meadows



One of the deer that was near the Baker Creek Trail below High Meadows.

Cool hikes on Big Pine Creek

Wild water. Gem-quality lakes. Alpine sights to send your spirits soaring.

A rocky bench above Willow Lake reveals the full splendor of Big Pine Creek country. Middle Palisade (14,040') and Norman Clyde Peak (13,956') pierce the sky above the Middle Palisade Glacier. This is wild, rugged and wet country.

That's the essence of the canyons of Big Pine Creek, one of the Eastern Sierra's premier hiking destinations.

Expect to hike as short as you like or as long as you dare on these mostly out-and-back trails. There's something here for just about every level of fitness and desire.

And water! Water everywhere, in lazy streams, forceful waterfalls punching holes through rock barriers, turquoise lakes, groundwater seeps. The North Fork is a great place to go if you're a water lover.

High above, at the end of the trail and beyond, are the great glaciers that spawn all this liquid. Up there is a two-mile long ridge of 14,000-foot mountains, the Palisades.

To reach Big Pine Canyon and its trails, drive to the town of Big Pine on Scenic 395. At the flashing street signal, turn west on Crocker Road and drive 12 miles to its end. As you leave Big Pine, the road climbs a 20-foot scarp left by the huge earthquake of 1872 — imagine that shake!

Dayhiker parking is at the end of the road. Walk past the summer cabins along Big Pine Creek, then follow signs leading to a handful of switchbacks along First Falls. In the quiet, flat valley above, hike along an old road left stranded when catastrophic flooding 14 years ago destroyed a mile of road below. A few switchbacks then lead through the gap in the cliff along Second Falls, above.

Within three miles of the start you'll reach Cienega Mirth. This is a bucolic hiking destination. Wildflowers like tiger lily, paintbrush, shooting star, wild onion and columbine, small plots of grasses woven into the pine and shrub landscape, and a pensive, hypnotizing stretch of the creek can induce serious lounging. Cool your feet in a bend in the creek, or break out your fishing pole. The large stone house near here dates to 1925, built for actor Lon Chaney and now used by Forest Service rangers.

If you have more time and energy, push ahead to get a taste of the glaciated country above. A series of lakes step up through the high country, linked by the North Fork. Trailside granite slabs above Second Lake (10,000'), a strenuous five miles in from the trailhead, are a great place to view the Pal- ➤ to 18

from 16 ➤ isades, still far away on the crest. Rising dramatically behind the lake is Temple Crag (12,999'), a stunning, intricate peak of sunlit buttresses and dark recesses.

The lake itself is turquoise and milky. This is due to silt, ground by the glacier above and carried into the lake by water. So fine it refuses to settle out, this silt—called *glacial flour*—scatters light to give lakes First, Second and Third this characteristic color. The other lakes in the canyon are not fed by glacial runoff, and so are clear.

Seriously fit dayhikers can push for the Palisade Glacier itself. Halfway between Third and Fourth lakes, a signed trail cuts south to Sam Mack Meadow. From Sam Mack, follow the signed trail that cuts across the meadow and heads up a rocky hillside. This trail deteriorates into boulder hopping and slabby granite as it reaches the rubbly moraine at the toe of the glacier. It's safe to walk around on the glacier near here, but travel higher up or along the sides of the glacier requires knowledgeable use of a rope.

Across the glacier is the formidable wall of North Palisade (14,242'), the highest point in the Palisades. Bulky, massive Mt. Sill (14,163') blocks the sky to its left.

Seriously fit dayhikers can push for the Palisade Glacier itself. Across the glacier is the formidable wall of North Palisade (14,242'), the highest point in the Palisades.

If the glacier's not your goal, consider adding a loop hike to Black Lake so you can get a great view across the canyon of the Palisade Glacier and the peaks above. This is about a 10-mile round trip from the trailhead.

Follow the Big Pine lakes trail as previously described to a trail junction at a stream just before First Lake. Take the right-hand fork. After a short climb, the trail levels out and the views open up. Continue to Black Lake and follow the trail to its junction with the main lakes trail near Fourth Lake. Turn left and head for home on the main trail.

Over on the South Fork of Big Pine Creek, a good dayhike tours the great U-shaped valley, gouged out by a huge tongue of ice that once flowed — slowly — down the canyon. The trail skirts through boulders and wildflowers until it reaches a creek crossing. A fine picnicking area is just minutes upriver. Give this trip two hours total.

If it's not too hot and you're feeling strong, punch up the switchbacks on the headwall above. It's not as far as it looks. At the top is a view to take your breath away. A few miles of Sierra Crest, jagged, with snow-covered approaches, awaits. Allow a full day for a comfortable round trip to here.

Beyond is the rugged upper reach of the South Fork, a jumble of rock.

Back down at the end of the road are four campgrounds in the aspen and Jeffrey pine forest along Big Pine Creek's excellent trout fishing. A pack station there offers pack trips and day rides into the backcountry.

MUST SEE!

Tinemaha Wildlife Viewing
619-872-1171
Often good for spotting huge tule elk, flocks of water birds or solitary hawks and eagles, always good for taking in a 360° view of Owens Valley and its mountain guardians. Nine miles south of Big Pine on Scenic 395, take the signed dirt road a half-mile east to a knoll.

Klondike Lake
619-872-1104
A shallow lake suitable for water sports, especially windsurfing or water skiing, and especially during spring and fall. Three miles north of Big Pine, turn right off the highway onto a signed dirt road.

Gem & Mineral Show
619-938-2114
Big Pine turns its streets into center stage for rock hounds.
May 17–18, 1997.

Western Screech Owl in a tree on Flower Alley in Big Pine.
Photo by Howard Walker

Big Pine Canyon: glacier gateway

▲The Palisade Glacier and 14,000-foot peaks vie for attention at Big Pine Creek

Keith Allen

Palisade Glacier, largest in the Sierra, below a wall of 14,000-foot peaks.

In a land noted for its stupendous mountain scenery, the roadside attractions really don't get any better than those along Big Pine Creek.

The creek has cut a 2,000-foot deep canyon, since smoothed out by massive glaciers that slid and ground through these parts years ago.

Up above — that is, far, far above — smaller versions of those great glaciers persist. The Palisade Glacier covers a square mile at about 12,000', about nine miles up the North Fork trail. Aggressive dayhikers can explore it in a day, but an overnighter with campsites at any of the numerous lakes that dot the canyon means more time to do it right.

But if that's too far, or time's short, equally grand scenery is just outside the car at the end of the road, 11 miles out of Big Pine. A minute's walk unveils views up the South Fork to the smaller Middle Palisade Glacier. Towering above is Middle Palisade (14,040'). To its right, even more imposing, is Norman Clyde Peak (13,956'), named after the famous and skilled mountaineer who lived nearby for half a century, climbing hundreds of first ascents.

Also at the roadend is Glacier Lodge, a year-round dining and lodging business full of history and mountain tales, offering comfort at 8,000'.

Three campgrounds, a pack station, excellent fishing in stocked streams, skiing in winter and spring, hiking in summer and fall: Big Pine Canyon has it all.

DINING

BIG PINE

RESTAURANTS		Cuisine	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Beer & Wine	Cocktails	Entertainment	Reservations Taken	Major Credit Cards	Banquets & Catering	Take-out	Outdoor Dining	Senior Discounts	Child's Menu
Glacier Lodge 619-938-2837 P.O. Box 370, Big Pine, CA 93513	Open May–Jan. At the end of the Big Pine Canyon road, elev. 7,800'.	Gourmet	✔	✔	✔	✔			✔	✔	✔	✔			✔

Two weeks after that first storm, and three days after Thanksgiving, another smaller storm blew through our area, but I figured there would be less snow now on the trail, so I headed back to the trailhead for another attempt at Second Lake in North Fork Big Pine. It was a little before 9 a.m. when I pulled into the parking lot and the first thing I noticed, as it literally smacked me in the face, was the intense wind blowing at the trailhead. It wasn't necessarily a frigid wind, but I could tell right away that I was in for an adventure.

The trail starts near the old Glacier Lodge, next to some summer cabins alongside Big Pine Creek in a fragrant pine forest. The sound of the wind howling through the trees made itself present immediately, as leaves were swirling over the creek and blanketing trail. I crossed the wood bridge, built in 1985, over Second Falls and turned right onto the North Fork trail, starting a series of steep, short switchbacks up to an old dirt road. I took the high trail and, unlike my attempt two weeks prior, there was zero snow all the way up to First Falls and beyond. I was stoked!

The first snow on the trail was reached at the 2.6-mile mark and again the wind was blowing fiercely through the trees and up the canyon walls. There was a well-beaten track in the packed snow all the way to the Lon Chaney cabin, which I passed by this time and continued up the trail towards First and Second Lakes. I had yet to see any other brave souls out for a hike to this point and honestly I was thoroughly enjoying the solitude, despite the gale-force winds.

The snow was covering the rocks in a downhill section of raging North Fork Big Pine Creek where the trail comes within inches of the shore, splashing me slightly with the assistance of the wind. Two and a half hours into the hike I spotted a snow-covered First Lake below, looking completely white, instead of the beautiful blue that's seen in the warmer summer months.

The ice on the trail was a slight annoyance but that didn't stop me from continuing another half mile and arriving at wind-swept and snow-covered Second Lake, 4.5 miles from the trailhead. The wind was blowing the hardest I had felt all day so far, pushing me backwards as I was climbing the granite slabs and boulders to the south. I managed a couple of pictures while searching for a place to hide, which was a complete failure. The wind was inescapable! My time at Second Lake was cut short by the elements but I did enjoy a nice chicken lunch back down at the Lon Chaney cabin and actually saw some other hikers loitering about, contemplating their initial plans. They eventually went on their way and me on mine, both equally amazed by the enchanting Sierra Nevada.

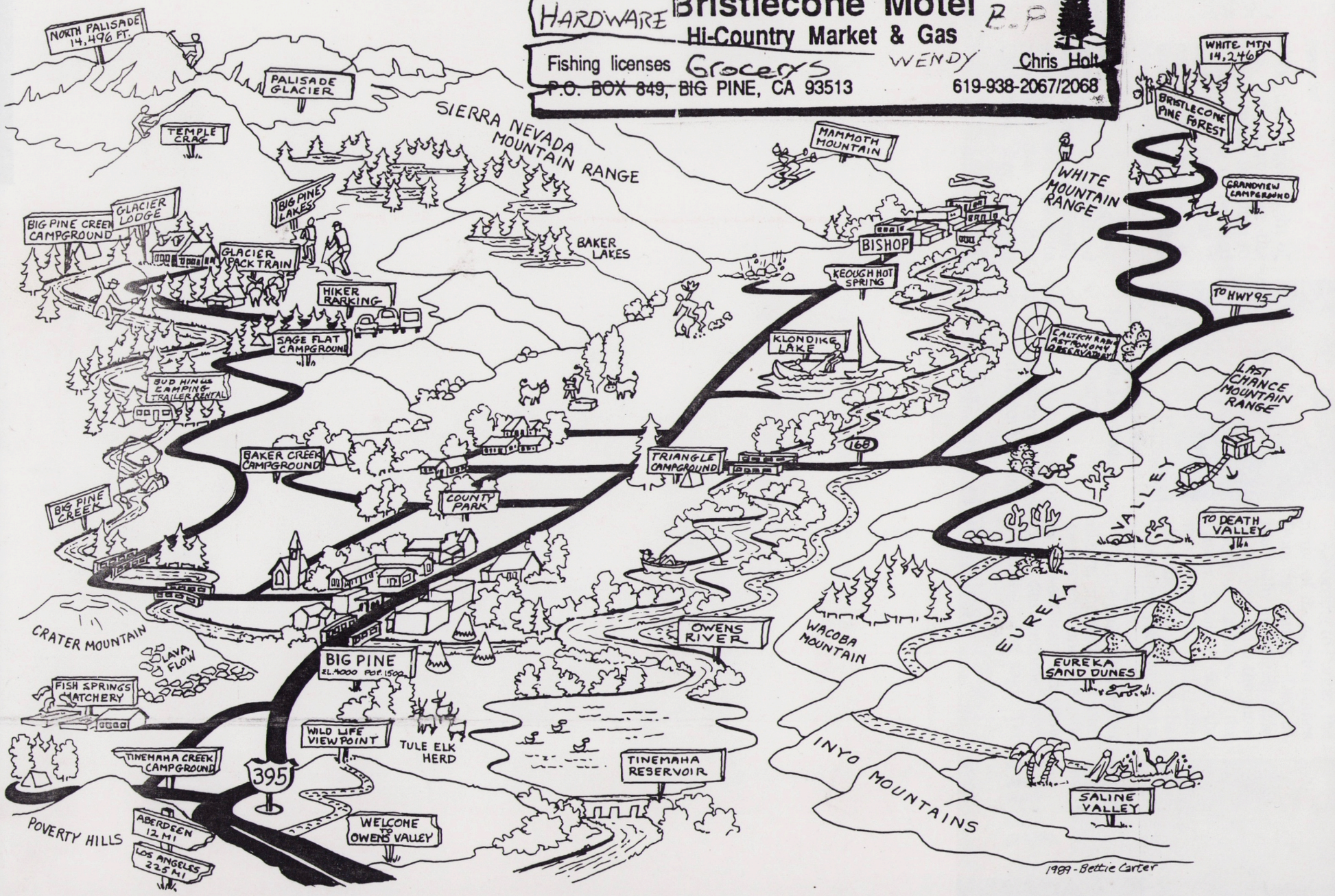
Temple Crag towers above Second Lake on this cold and very windy day.

11-26-2017

BIG PINE RECREATION AREA

Big Pine, 4,000 ft. elevation lies in the heart of the beautiful Owens Valley, an easy half-day drive from southern California on U.S. highway 395, the arterial highway from southern California to Reno, Nevada.

HARDWARE **Bristlecone Motel** B.P.
Hi-Country Market & Gas
Fishing licenses Groceries WENDY
~~P.O. BOX 849,~~ BIG PINE, CA 93513 Chris Holt 619-938-2067/2068



While white settlers began building large homes in the Owens Valley, and U.S. Army soldiers began constructing Fort Independence, the local Native Americans kept their traditional tule homes.

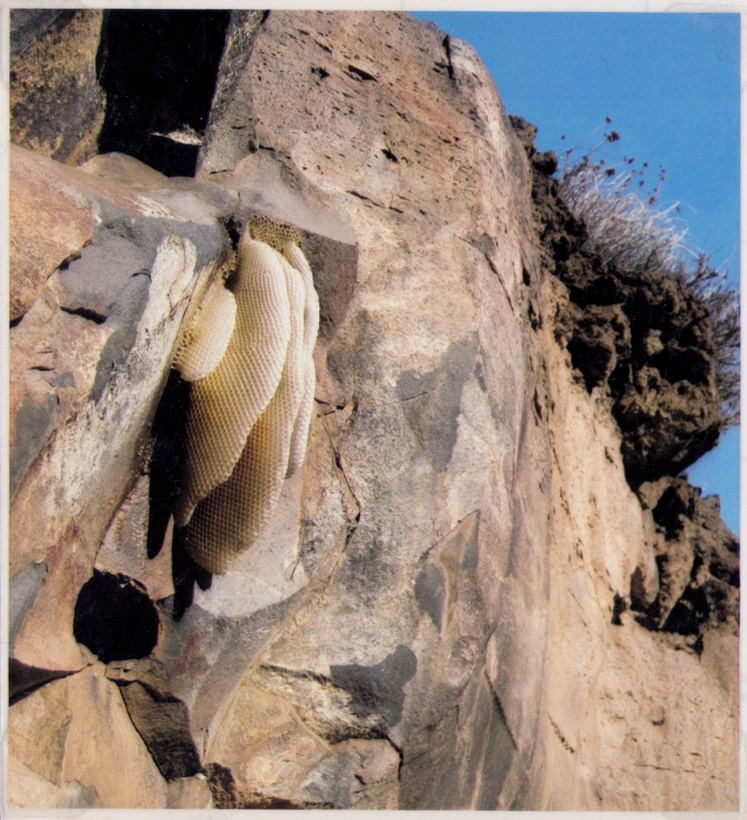
Photo courtesy Eastern California Museum

Fig. 8.2. "A Mono Home." Taken by E. S. Curtis (1972) in 1924, this photograph shows an aboriginal domed wikiup with rock foundation in a historic village situated on the outskirts of the modern town of Big Pine, scarcely a kilometer northeast of Crater Middens. Crater Middens is located at the foot of the basalt fields of Crater Mountain visible to the left of the dwelling.

Two door canyon Crater Mtn. Area 2012

Joe Bright

George Derrick



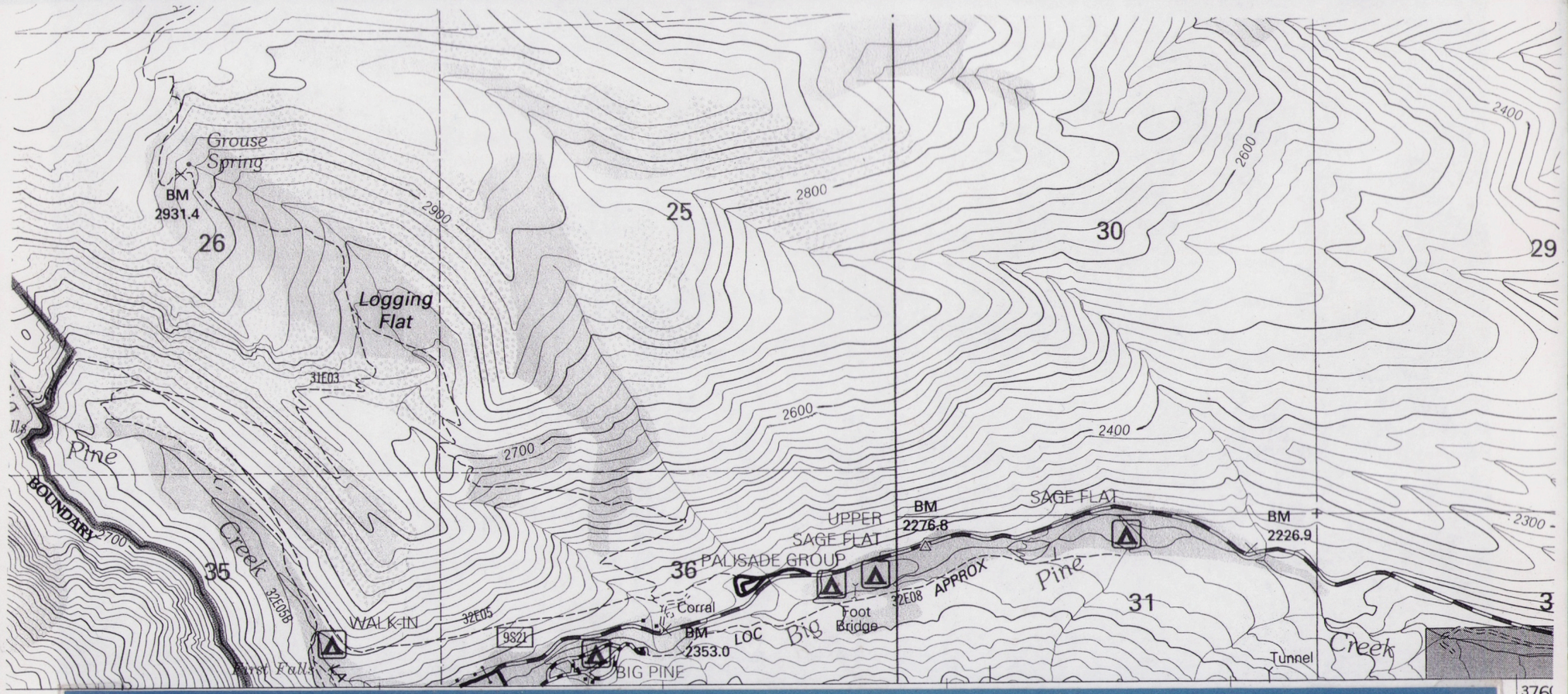
Honey comb

Indian house ring

2012

WILD BEES NEAR BIG PINE

Howard Walker



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wide-ranging complex of streams inps of the historical village, in- Travel the Bishop Pass/Long

Laws Railroad Museum

North Fork Trail – Black Lake

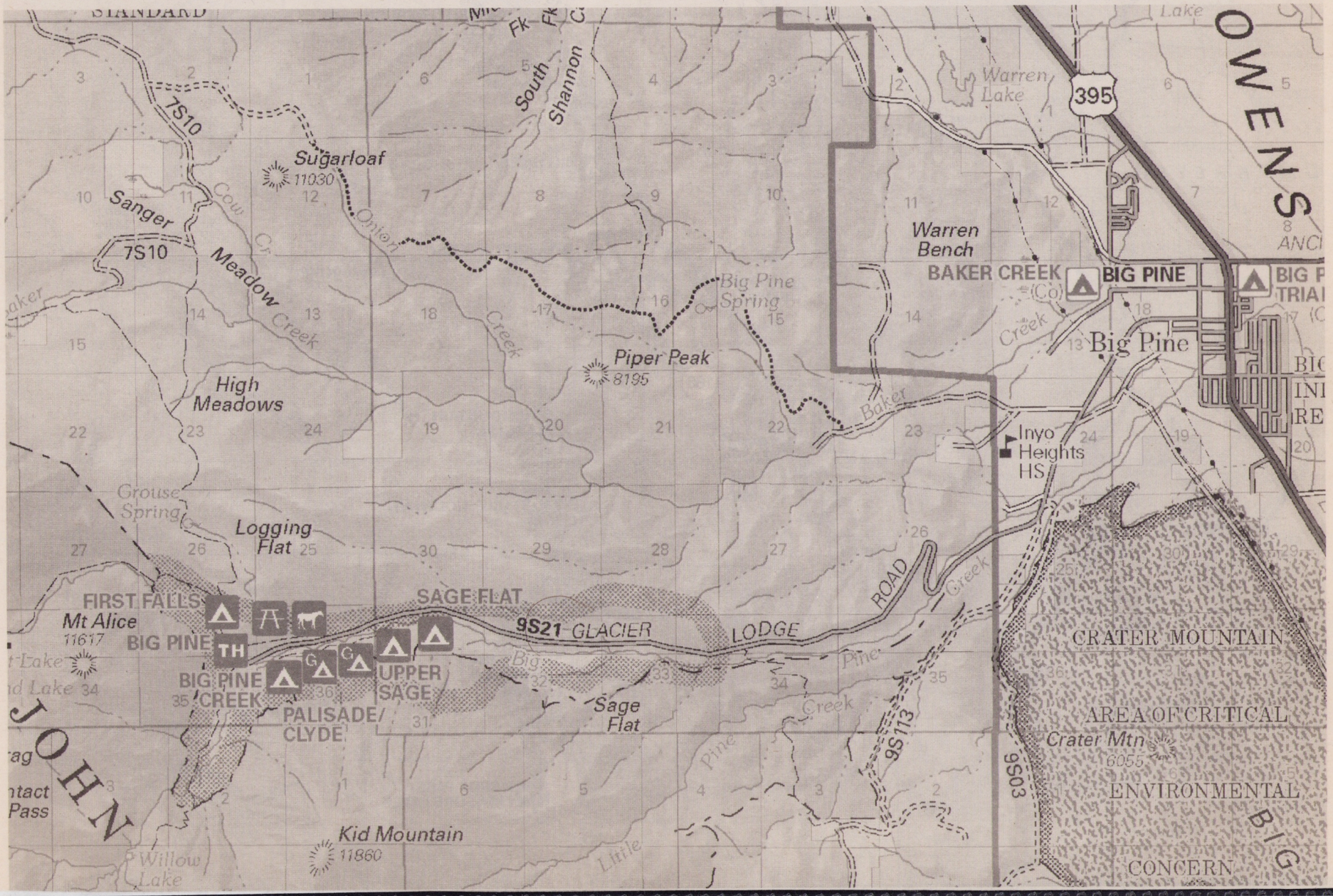
5.5 miles one-way / Strenuous

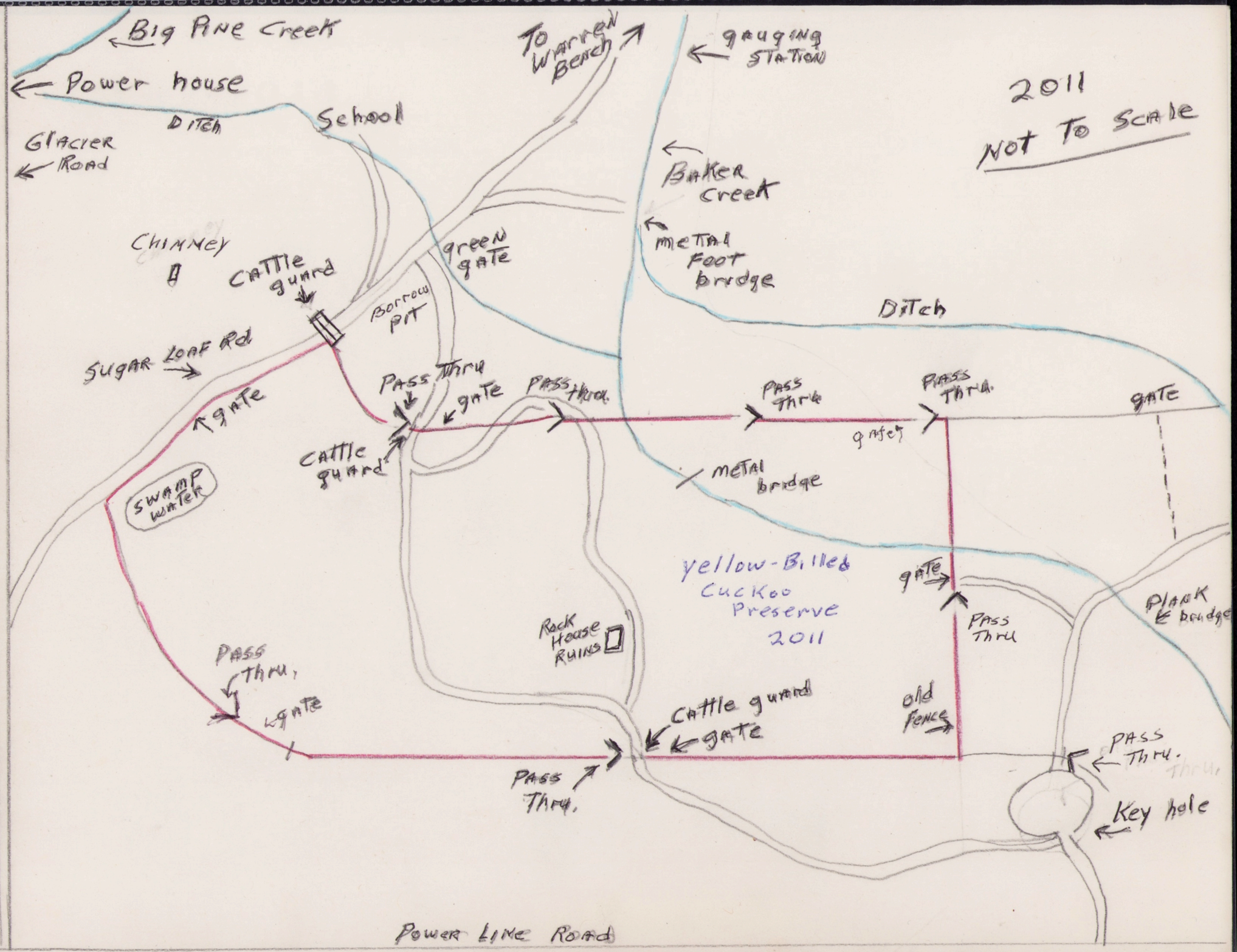
The trail zigzags through a slope of sagebrush, manzanita and Jeffrey pine before it reaches Second Falls, then follows the creek to its headwaters. While walking through a forest of lodgepole pine, hikers will pass a cabin built by movie actor Lon Chaney. At a junction in the trail, you can head northwest to Black Lake, where splendid views of the Palisade Glacier and Crest can be seen.

North Fork Trail – First, Second and Third Lakes

First Lake 4.5 miles one-way / Moderate
Second Lake 4.8 miles one-way / Moderate
Third Lake 5.5 miles one-way / Strenuous

The main trail takes you past First, Second and Third Lakes. Third Lake is fed directly by Palisade Glacier; its milky turquoise color is from the glacial powder carried from the melting ice. The imposing dark mountain above Third Lake is Temple Crag.




Big Pine Creek
Power house
Ditch
Glacier Road
School
To Warren Bench
gauging station
2011
Not To Scale
Baker Creek
metal foot bridge
Chimney
cattle guard
green gate
Borrow pit
Ditch
Sugar Loaf Rd
gate
Pass Thru
gate
Pass thru.
Pass Thru
Pass Thru.
gate
gate
cattle guard
metal bridge
swamp water
yellow-Billed Cuckoo Preserve 2011
gate
Pass Thru
Plank bridge
Rock House Ruins
Pass Thru.
gate
Cattle guard
gate
old fence
Pass Thru.
Key hole
Pass Thru.
Power Line Road

Inyo National Forest

The Palisades, Kings Canyon National Park

VACATION HUB *of the* EASTERN SIERRA

ANCIENT BRISTLECONE PINE FOREST
PALISADE GLACIER
NORTH ENTRANCE to DEATH VALLEY
CAMPING - HIKING - CLIMBING
HUNDREDS OF MILES OF YEAR-ROUND BACK ROADS

FISHING
(A Creek Runs Through It)

BIG PINE

BIG PINE CHAMBER of COMMERCE & VISITOR CENTER
P.O.BOX 23 - 126 SOUTH MAIN - BIG PINE, CA 93513

619-938-2114

Eastern Sierra's golden days

Photographs by DAN BLACKBURN

CAMERA-READY: Leaf-changing season in the Sierra usually begins in late September at higher elevations. Big Pine Canyon offers views such as this. 10-17-2010

10-17-2010

DAN BLACKBURN
REPORTING FROM BISHOP, CALIF.

There is gold in the hills of the Eastern Sierra, but you don't have to dig to find it. It returns every autumn when Mother Nature paints the aspen leaves in the Sierra with shades of gold, yellow and even red. All you have to do is travel up scenic U.S. Highway 395 to discover your own glorious gold.

The leaf-changing season in much of the Eastern Sierra usually starts in late September at the higher elevations and creeps down to the lower reaches well into October. For photographers, it is a seasonal nirvana — mostly. Nature photographer George Lepp calls the season temperamental. "Wind and weather can cut the color short," he says. Check with the U.S. Forest Service offices along the route.

The winding road a couple of miles up Big Pine Canyon is an outstanding place to begin the search for fall gold. The old Glacier Lodge at the 8,000-foot level burned some years ago, but good places to park remain. Just a few yards away a pond reflects the mountains and dramatic fall color, one of the better views in the Sierra. Some people stop here, but my partner, Gloria, and I took a short walk to the main trailhead and a favorite spot where we found four happy women enjoying lunch while surrounded by aspens and pines. The trail itself is arched over with leaves set aglow by the afternoon sun.

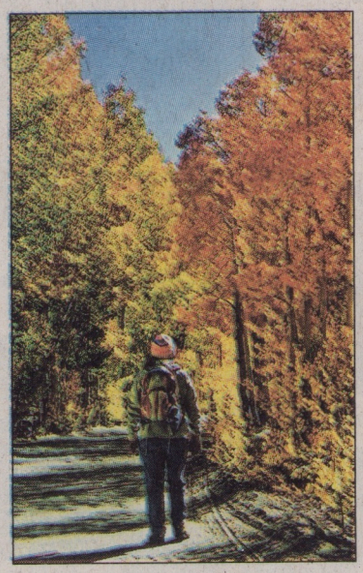
About a dozen miles farther up 395 is Bishop, our base of operations, the largest of the Eastern Sierra communities, home to a major U.S. Forest Service office and gateway to some of the best fall color in the region. Head out on West Line Street toward the mountains and pick any of several canyons. All of the side canyons share the name of the major one — Bishop Canyon. There are even a few places to stay with snug cabins. Bishop Creek Lodge also serves tasty breakfasts and dinners, and its front porch is a good perch from which to see good fall color.

Nearby, a year-round waterfall surrounded by colorful aspens often draws a crowd of viewers. If you want to sleep closer to the ground, good Forest Service campgrounds abound. We are partial to the well-maintained Sabrina Campground, with the north fork of Bishop Creek bubbling nearby.

Back on U.S. 395, we climbed over Sherwin Summit and turned left at Tom's Place, a small, rustic resort with a cluster of aspens and a good spot for lunch. This is the entrance to Rock Creek Canyon, where fall color stretches for miles.

Seekers of the Sierra's leafy gold can spend an entire day prowling this canyon and the busy creek that carved it. Rock Creek Canyon is unusual in this area because it faces north and south rather than east and west. As a result, it tends to have a different weather pattern that seems to bolster the trees' fall colors.

FINE DINING: A picnic area in Big Pine Canyon is framed by glowing foliage. At this time of year, fall color stretches for miles, providing golden opportunities for leaf peepers.



AT HAND: A hiker pauses in Bishop Canyon. The town of Bishop is a gateway to autumn.

As we head farther north on 395, Lake Crowley — well known for its fishing — appeared on the right. But our eyes were drawn to Hilton Creek, which spilled out of the mountains on our left. Crossing over the highway, we headed toward the sunlit aspens along the back roads just beyond a small community at the base of the Sierra. Nearby is McGee Canyon, one of the best spots in the Eastern Sierra for intense fall color, and its own cheerful creek.

Although most of the aspens are yellow or golden in the fall, some turn a vibrant red. This, Forest Service experts say, is a genetic feature of certain aspen groves not related to weather or a magical snap of cold weather. When the red leaves do appear, the scene can be jaw-dropping. The first time I saw them, I thought I had wandered into a movie set.

Returning to 395, we paused at Convict Lake, where the surrounding jagged peaks are framed by aspens. From the parking lot, a trail winds around the lake to the far end, where leaves carpeted the ground and clung to the trees. The setting was spellbinding. And we were far from done.

The June Lake loop north of Mammoth is a leaf peeper's delight. There are lakes, creeks, waterfalls and an abundance of aspens, along with cabins and horses for rent. Lee Vining Canyon — the eastern entry to Yosemite — has its share of glowing aspens in its lower reaches. It also has a Mobil gas station and its now-famous Whoa Nellie Deli, which can be packed at lunchtime. Just up the road in Lee Vining is Murphey's Motel, popular with photographers.

North of town, brilliant red-leafed aspens can be found at Lundy Canyon. Their colors were so intense that they looked like flames flickering among the forest of pine trees. Although the entire canyon is gorgeous, the best part is near the end of its dirt road. There, generations of beavers have built their dams, creating a series of ponds surrounded by aspens.

Heading north again, we left the Inyo National Forest and crossed into the Toiyabe National Forest. Virginia Lakes — popular with summer visitors — has its own stand of aspen, and the turnoff from the highway is clearly marked. Just a little farther north at Green Creek, a road took us to a trailhead leading into the Hoover Wilderness. Aspens are everywhere. Next up: the town of Bridgeport and the road to Twin Lakes. Several campgrounds at Twin Lakes are a good place to catch some shut-eye before one last day of collecting autumn gold.

With Bridgeport in the rearview mirror, we headed north again on 395 to the junction with California Highway 108, where we turned to the west toward the Sonora Pass, at more than 9,600 feet.

Sonora Pass had red, yellow and gold in almost every direction. On the western side of the pass, a year-round waterfall tumbles over boulders and beneath golden aspens right to the road. "People think of New England for fall color," says Lindsay Pulliam, a Forest Service ranger in the area for more than 20 years, "but many places like this in the Sierra can equal New England, and they are right here in our backyard."

Pulliam also has some serious advice for leaf peepers: "Be prepared. Remember you are coming from a lower elevation. Allow yourself to acclimate a bit, and bring an extra jacket or sweater because the weather can change in a hurry."

If you are lucky, seeing the gold of the aspens against the pristine white of newly fallen snow makes you feel as though you have struck it rich.

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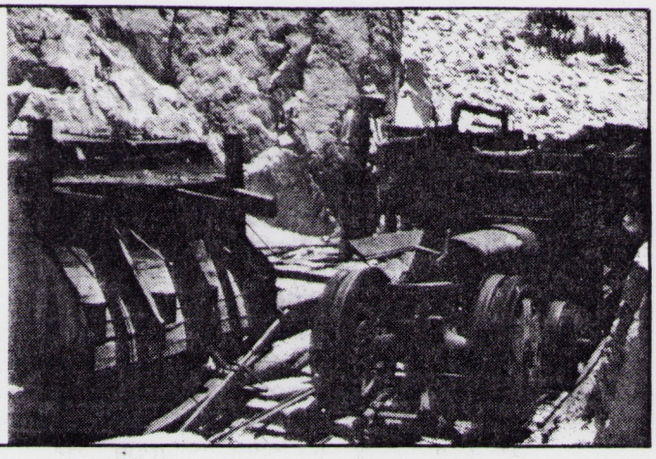
ery at Nikki Beach and then what Cabo night life is best

SECOND LAKE DAM

"The Album"
April 1990

by T. Eugene Barrows



DWP tractor-locomotive with flanged drive wheels. T.E. Barrows photo, Aug. 15, 1956.

In the early days of settling Owens Valley and bringing it under cultivation, farmers in the vicinity of Big Pine found the stream flow of Big Pine Creek sufficient for their crops in the early part of the summer, but the flow dwindled off before crops matured. As irrigated acreage increased, more water was needed than was supplied by the normal creek flow.

To obtain more water for irrigation farmers looked to the lakes at the head of the creek to augment dwindling summer supplies. They found their answer at Second Lake where it was feasible to tunnel through solid rock and tap the lake many feet below its surface. In 1895 this was done and a control gate was built in the tunnel. By using the gate they could control the outflow of lake water.

To add to the capacity of the lake a low dam was built and a spillway cut in solid rock at the south end of the dam to take care of spring overflow. With this arrangement the control gate could be adjusted to release water from the lake and insure sufficient irrigation water after the normal creek flow slacked off during the summer.

This irrigation system was acquired along with the other property and water rights, by the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and plans were made to build three hydro-electric plants on Big Pine Creek. To increase the potential output of these plants plans were also made to raise the height of the dam at Second Lake. By May 1925 these plans were in full swing.

There was no road to the farmers' dam at Second Lake and the terrain was rough and steep. To build and maintain a road would be costly and of little use after construction of the proposed dam. It was decided by Department of Water and Power officials to use mules, the usual mode of mountain transportation in those days, to transport the necessary material and supplies to build the dam.

The largest and strongest mules to be found were obtained and fitted out with pack saddles, panniers and all necessary equipment for all types of loads. Some pieces of machinery were too heavy and unwieldy for a single mule. To transport such loads two mules were used in tandem. Their pack saddles were flat on top and each fitted with a bolster that could pivot. To these bolsters were attached side rails about two feet apart, extending from the front mule to the rear one, with enough distance between mules to allow a load to be suspended from the side rails between them. The load, being suspended from both side rails, was more stable and not so apt to sway as it would have been if suspended from a single rail. Any swaying of the load was dangerous and could throw the mules off balance on the narrow trail. If one of the tandem mules lost his balance both mules and their loads would plunge down the mountainside with disastrous results, which did happen on occasion.

The pivoted bolsters permitted the mules to negotiate the numerous sharp curves of the trail. Some of the heaviest and most difficult loads consisted of two tractor-locomotives which were disassembled for transportation to the dam site. Each unit consisted of a Fordson farm tractor fitted with flanged heavy iron wheels instead of the usual tractor wheels. This was done so they could run on a track of steel rails. Tandem mules not only transported these unwieldy parts of machinery, but carried the long lengths of pipe, lumber, rails for the railroad track, and other heavy loads.

A camp had to be built, with quarters for the men, a mess (or cook house), blacksmith shop, and necessary storage sheds. As the elevation is close to 10,000 feet at Second Lake, winter conditions can be severe.

An air compressor was brought up piece by piece, reassembled and housed so pneumatic drills could be used in drilling rock. Blasting powder was stored in a room hollowed out of solid rock some distance from the camp for safety. A cut had to be made through solid rock in order to lay track from the dam site to where slide rock was available for material to build the dam. About a mile of track, including switches and side track, was laid.

The rolling stock for the project consisted of two Fordson tractors converted to "locomotives" so they could run on the steel rails. The running gears of the cars used to transport rock were of iron frame on metal wheels flanged to run on the tracks. The beds of these cars were made of two inch planking reinforced with metal; they were side dump cars. Switches in the track permitted one tractor-

locomotive to haul and dump a "train load" of rock while the other was being loaded at the rock slide.

Work had not progressed far when strong opposition to the rock-filled dam arose, and the project was abandoned in favor of one to be built on the Owens River in Long Valley.

In time, most of the material at Second Lake was moved out, but heavy things, such as the tractor-locomotives, rock cars, rails, and reinforcing iron were left behind. The buildings were all done away with except one small building used by hydrogaphers and other Department crews on snow survey, checking the dam or operating the gate in the tunnel, cleaning the spillway or debris in spring, or other maintenance work.

One hydro-electric plant had been built and went into operation July 29, 1925 on Big Pine Creek at the mouth of the canyon. It was designated "Big Pine No. 3" on the original plan, but No. 1 and 2 were never built. It is still known as Big Pine No. 3 Power Plant, and is still in operation. When the stream flow slacks off, the gate in the farmers' dam is slightly opened and adjusted from time to time as necessary to keep the plant operating with a full head of water. The gate is closed during spring run-off and the lake fills again.

In the early 1960s the Sierra Club and other conservationists put pressure on the Department of Water and Power to get rid of the material left behind at Second Lake, except for the patrol cabin. A crew was sent up with a team of mules to collect the objectionable material, some of which was burned in the ravine.

The wooden bodies of the mine cars and other combustible material, the metal parts, and the locomotives were piled on the railroad tracks in the cut. The combustibles were burned and the sides of the cut blasted down, covering the metal material.

As years went by, weather began to expose the metal buried there, and the rails were still in place, so again pressure was put on the Department of Water and Power to get rid of the debris.

In 1976 the Department of Water and Power and the Ecology Corps, with the aid of a helicopter and crew, went to Second Lake for a final clean up. The Ecology crew gathered all the objectionable material and with a cutting torch reduced the large pieces to smaller, more easily handled pieces. The locomotives were cut apart instead of being disassembled. Everything was weighed and put in piles to be picked up by the helicopter.

The helicopter base was set up on a flat place near the road, a few miles up the Big Pine canyon, where the debris was dropped and loaded by a crew onto Department of Water and Power trucks. This was also the helicopters' fueling station.

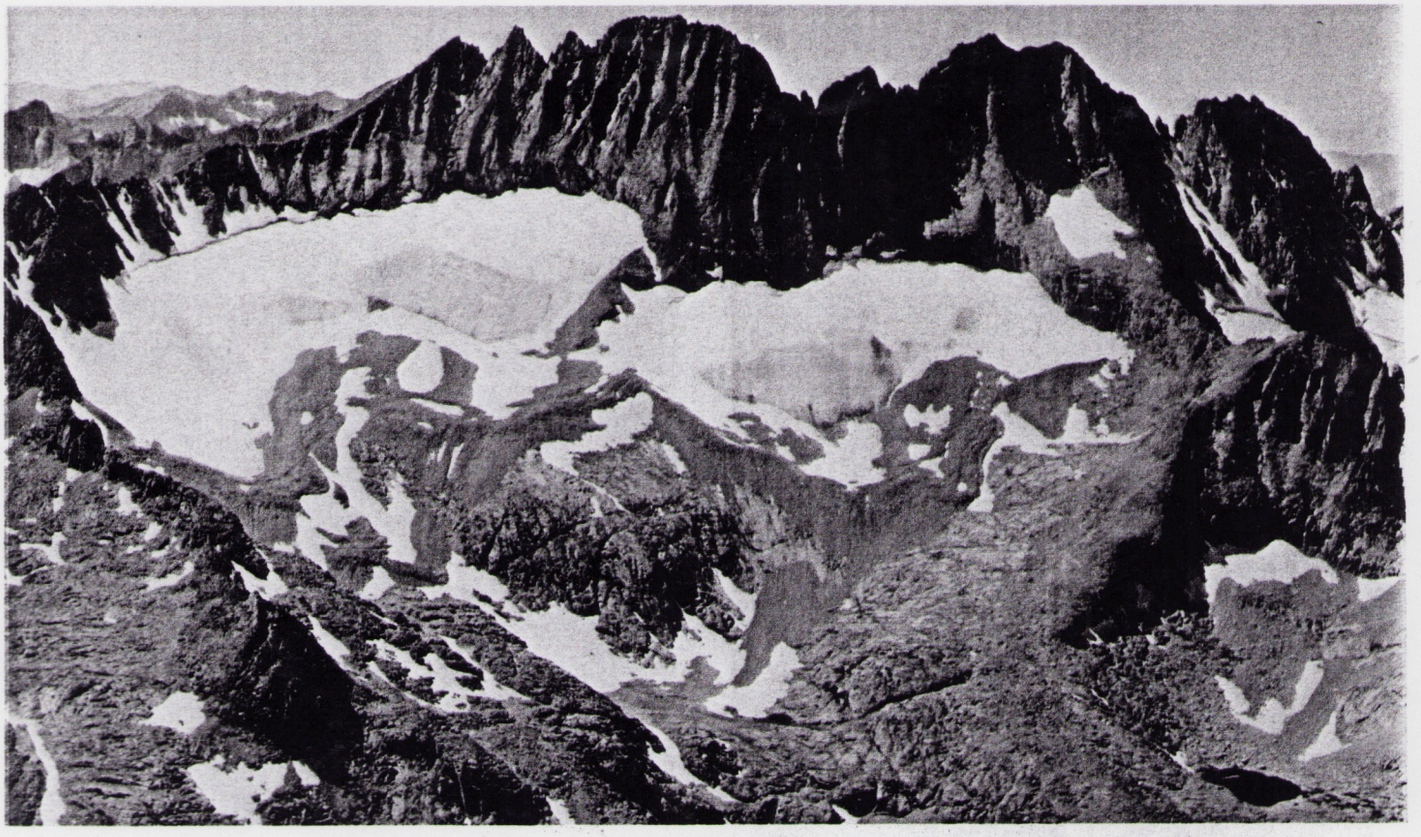
After fueling, the helicopter returned to Second Lake where the Ecology crew had a load of material weighed to the exact pound that could safely be carried. The helicopter hovered over the weighed load and a dangling cable, about 25 feet long, was attached to the load with a hook, then away it went to the base site. There it hovered as the load hit the ground and a man unhooked the cable for the return trip. They brought out a load every 12 minutes. The weight of each load was increased to the weight of fuel used on the last round trip, until it was necessary to refuel. Then the load was readjusted to compensate for the full tank.

At all times the Ecology crew at Second Lake, the helicopter crew and the crew at the base site were in radio contact with each other, talking back and forth during the air lifts. It took only three ten-hour days to lift the leftover debris out of Second Lake dam area, and it was done without a mishap. This was quite a contrast to the way all the material and supplies were packed in on muleback.

The Department of Water and Power donated the parts of the locomotives, some of the rock car metal parts, and some of the rock drilling equipment to the Eastern California Museum, trucking them to the Museum equipment yard. ❁

Helicopter with load of road rails from Second Lake. T.E. Barrows photo, Oct. 6, 1976.

Inyo-Mono Outdoor Guide 1962



One of the most famous landmarks in the Inyo National Forest is the Palisade Glacier located in the rugged High Sierra country west of Big Pine. According to Francois E. Matthes, noted geologist, it is the largest of the fifty-odd ice bodies in the Sierra Nevada. The glacier can be reached by pack train. (Walt Frost Photo).

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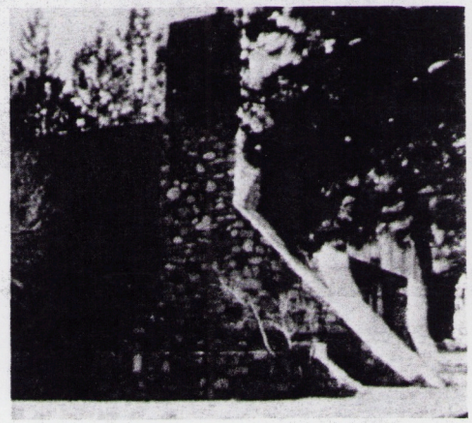
We invite you to visit us this summer for a vacation you'll never forget! Glacier Lodge, located on beautiful Big Pine Creek, is the nearest High Sierra Resort to Southern California. Our Upper Lodge, unique in that it offers meals and accommodations for a limited number of guests in the back-country, is near the famed Palisade Glacier. We suggest you make early reservations.

MAIN LODGE

At our main lodge, we have housekeeping cabins and rooms in Lodge Annex. American plan prevails in all except housekeeping cabins.



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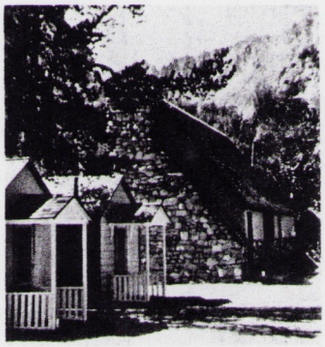

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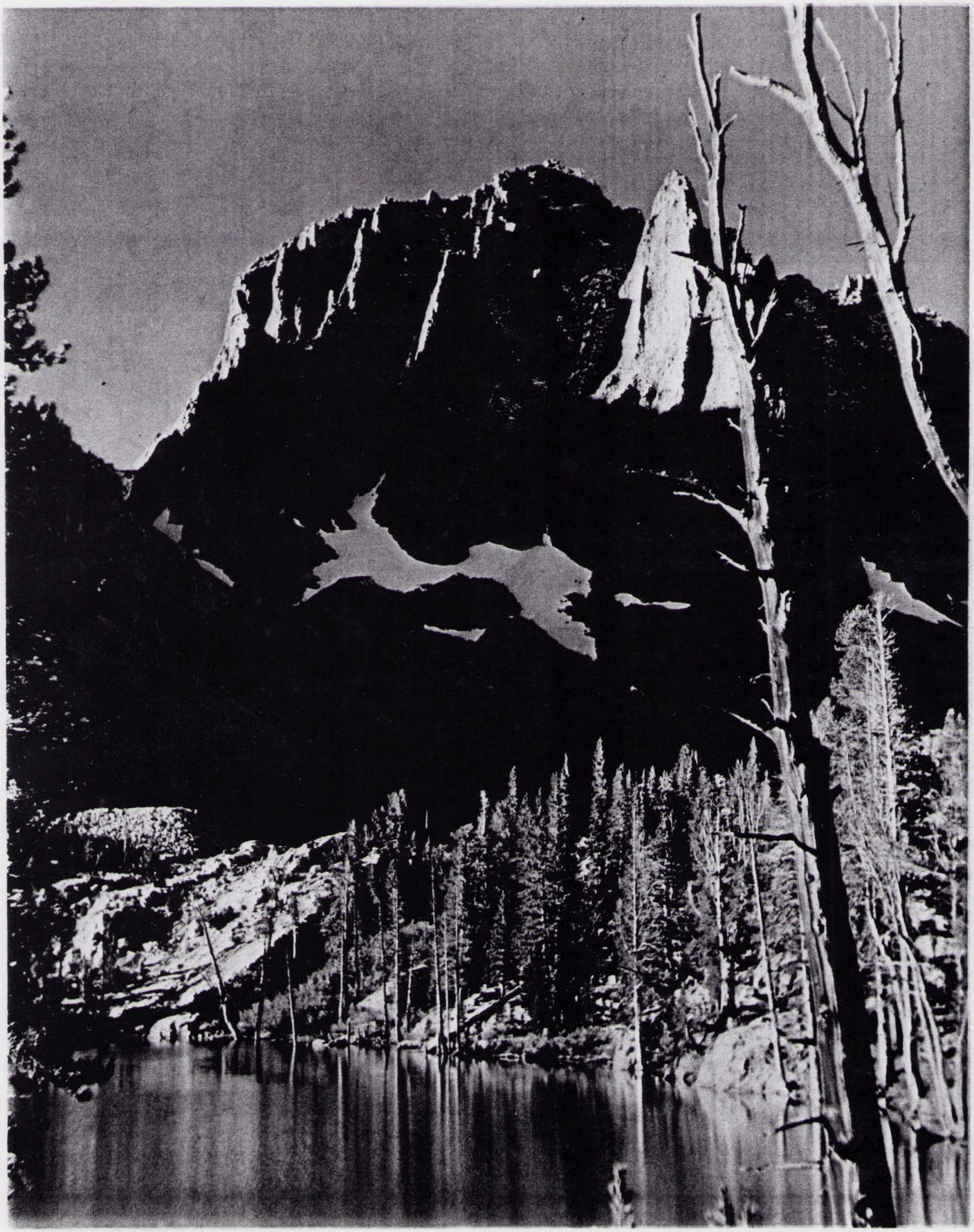


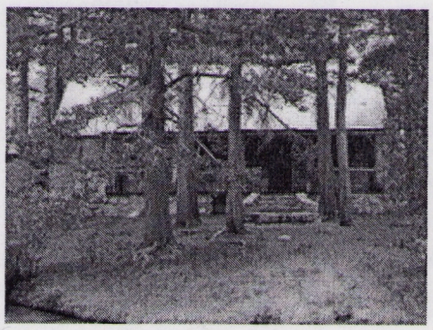
Temple Crag, famous landmark west of Big Pine, rears its massive bulk into the High Sierra sky. This spectacular view is across one of the Big Pine Lakes in the Big Pine back country. (Tom Henderson Photo)

Day Hiking in Big Pine Canyon

by Dave McNeill

Most visitors driving along Hwy 395 don't notice Big Pine, because they are usually going to Mt. Whitney or Mammoth Lakes. There is not much happening in Big Pine and that is how the residents like it. They are proud of their backcountry and the geological wonders that await there to be explored.

Big Pine has still retained its small town character even though millions of tourists pass through all year long skiing, fishing, hiking, off-roading or visiting the Palisades mini-glaciers. The east side of the town is primarily Paiute Indian reservation land and all others live across the highway to the west. The town definitely has its host of characters including mountain men, cowboys and Indians. The people are as tough as the temperature extremes they live with from high altitude cold to intense desert heat.



Heading west out of Big Pine toward the trailhead up the canyon is the McMurray Meadows Road. Take a left before the road crosses the creek and drive up the hill to the backside of Crater Mountain (BLM Area of Critical Environmental Concern). It's fun to hike up on Crater Mountain through the lava fields and search for caves that the Indians visited. They actually left hunting blinds and sites up high on the crater that are situated where the animals passed through. Tule Elk still pass by these very same places today. Crater Mountain is an archeological wonder and that is only one out of many reasons why it is a sensitive area.

The road continues through barren, sage covered hills for miles until it enters the Jeffrey forest, gets real pleasant and more Sierra-like. Defunct mining operations are visible high up the hillsides on the south side of the road. The trailhead is small but it leads to big places on the south and north fork of Big Pine Creek like the indescribable Kings Canyon National Park.

This country is so rugged that there are no constructed trails going over the crest, except Bishop Pass to the north and Taboose many miles to the south-a virtual paradise for serious mountaineers. This is a situation where I hope there is reincarnation so I can come back and hike to new places, because it's impossible to see it all in a hundred lifetimes. All the stories of the people who have been there before us that were never recorded speak volumes.

We feel their presence at places like the Lon Chaney cabin along the North Fork Trail. The famous silent film actor, who was the son of deaf parents, hired a famous African American architect, Paul Revere Williams, to design the cabin. Forest Supervisor, Eugene Murphy, ensured that the cabin would be protected to this day as a historic monument, and it remains in perfect shape.

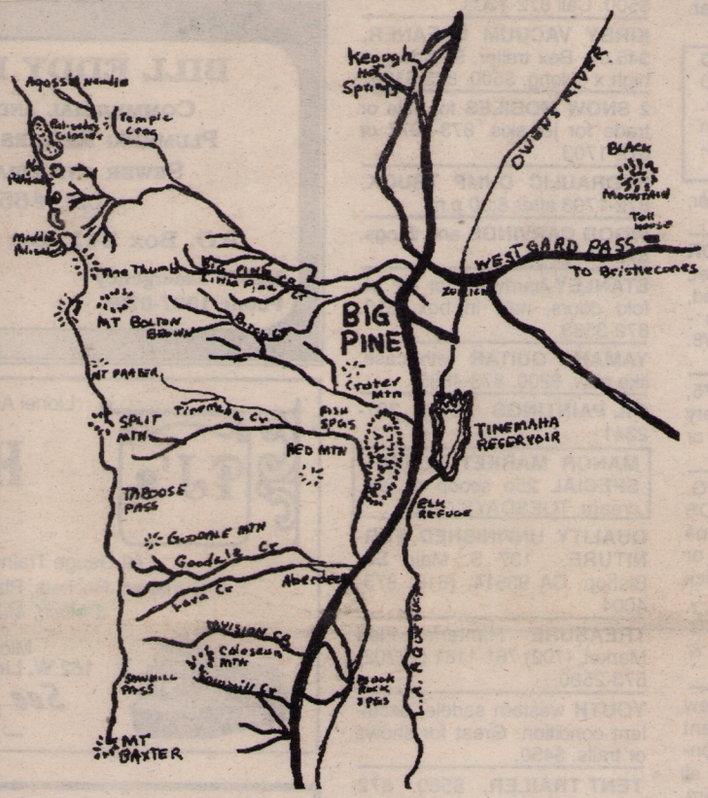
Beyond the Lon Chaney cabin on the North Fork Trail are a series of outstanding lakes called One through Seven, the Inconsolable Range, Palisade Glacier and Kings Canyon National Park.

Palisade Glacier is the largest and southern most mini-glacier in the Sierra and was formed 700 years ago in the Little Ice Age. This is where one can still see a bergschrund and a randkluft. A bergschrund is formed when moving ice separates from stagnant ice and forms a crevasse. A randkluft is where the ice separates from the rock face from melting action and can be hundreds of feet deep. Both of these features are very dangerous and not something you would ever want to fall into.

The South Fork Trail is steeper and goes to the Middle Palisade and Norman Clyde Glacier. Middle Palisade Peak tops out at 14,012 feet. Above First falls on the North Fork Trail, another trail takes off to Logging Flat and the Baker Lake area in the Coyote Mountains. This spot is outside of wilderness and a permit is not needed, except for Baker Lake. It was sure nice of the old loggers to leave a fair amount of trees at Logging Flat, and things have recovered nicely.

A Little about Big Pine

–Jane Fisher



A pretty village, so small you can hold your breath all the way through town if you really try, but the center of one of the beautiful areas of eastern California: that's Big Pine.

Little Big Pine started out in 1869 with land claims taken up by Duncan Campbell, Fred Reinhakel, W. F. Uhlmeyer, and S. G. Gregg. The tall Sequoia at the north end of town, so brightly decorated every Christmas, is not the tree for which Big Pine is named. At one time the Yellow Pines, that outline Big Pine Creek's course out of the mountains, streamed all the way down to the Owens River, but as time and man went on, they were cut for lumber and firewood until only one remained. At last, Big Pine's very namesake was destroyed to make way for a service station.

The loss of its namesake didn't stop folks from settling and building their ranches along the river, and tidy homes along its tree shaded streets. By 1880, there were 150 permanent residents, not counting pets and poultry. Wood stoves, kerosene lamps, and travel by horse, buggy, and train meant early to bed and early to rise, and neighbors helping and entertaining each other. Travel was from Alvord Station, later changed to Zurich because it was learned that there was another Alvord Station. The name, it is said, was suggested by the Nikolauses, a pioneer family with descendants still in Big Pine, who came from Zurich.

Although there was lots of hard work to be done, the late Dottie Willson talked about dances, Epworth League parties, and wonderful 4th of July parades. She was born in 1897 in Tule Canyon, but went through all her years of school in Big Pine, and at 21 married Howard Willson, her high school sweetheart. Most of the population came from the many large ranches at that time, the Willson's being at the end of Stewart Lane. Howard's father sold it about 1900, she recalled.

Dottie was the first librarian, appointed when she was just out of high school, and later became Big Pine's beloved postmistress for many years. Dottie's brother was Douglas Robinson, for whom the building at the Tri-County Fairground is named, and like many old families, they were related to lots of people whose names appear in stories of local pioneers in "The Album," a publication chronicling Inyo and Mono county histories.

Tom Uhlmeyer, from another pioneer Big Pine family, is also related to Dottie Willson on some branch of an intricate family tree. Tom lives in Porterville now, but has nostalgic memories of the pageants, of swimming in the creeks, canals, and river (even skinny dipping, he says), and of a story about a bull elk whose ending remains a carefully guarded secret.

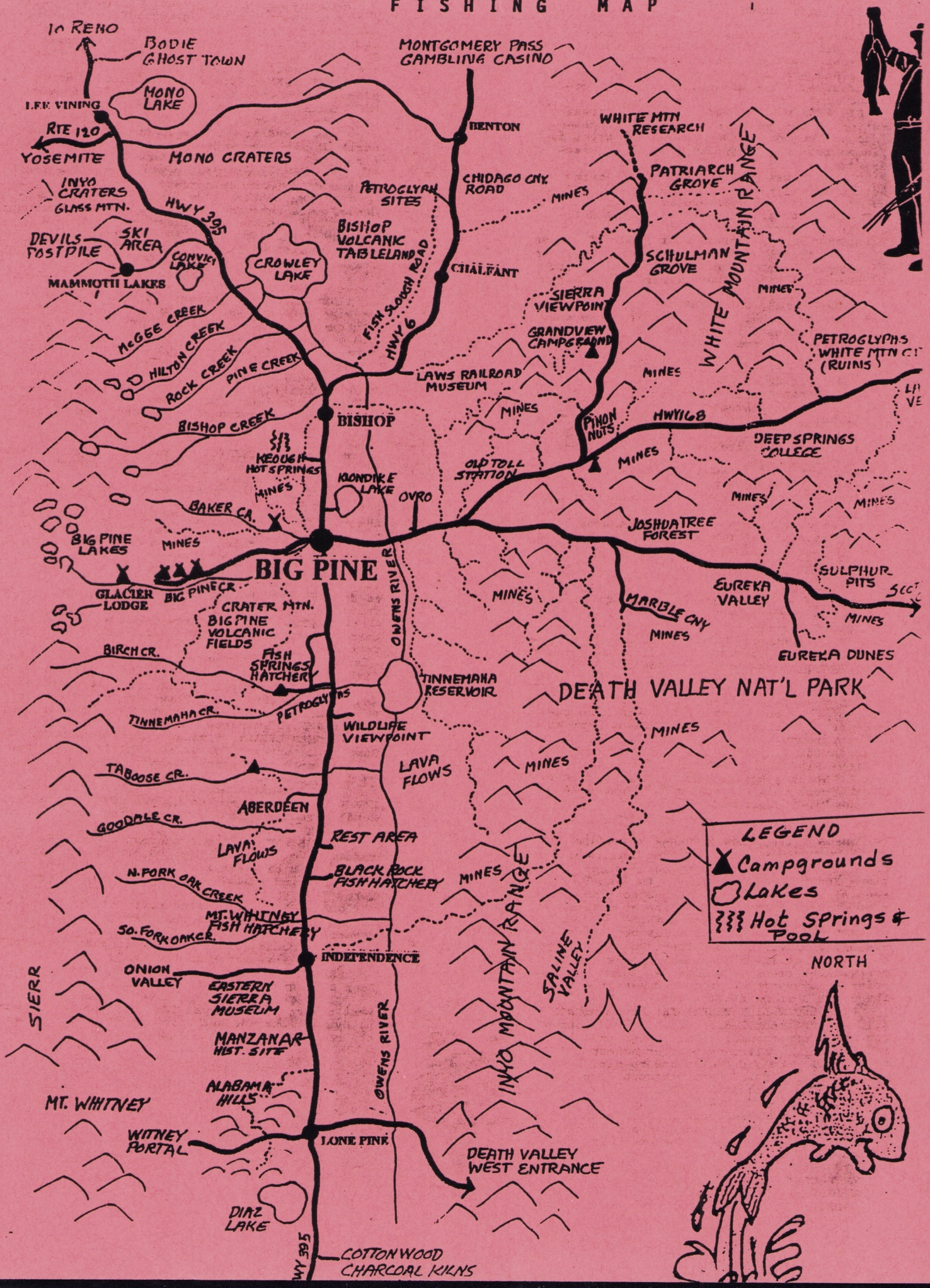
"Bill, the bull elk who chose to live in Big Pine instead of down by the river with his own kind," he writes, "liked fruit of all kinds. He devastated crops of apples, pears, and garden vegetables from any garden he could get into. His favorite munchie was the starched clean clothes he found on clotheslines, much to the consternation of the housewives of Big Pine. I know the true story about Bill's demise, but can tell no one until at least the two people sworn to secrecy at the time have died. I was not so sworn and the story becomes fair game when I go."

Tom also remembers the day Bill Mendenhall stopped Governor Rolph for speeding through the school zone. When the Governor asked what he could do to make amends for his error in judgment, Bill told him it would be a good idea to shake hands with the entire student body. So the Governor stood by the flag pole in front of the school and shook the hand of every one of the 75 students that day, including Tom. It would never happen now.

From Big Pine today, the ageless canyons and mountains on each side lure resident and visitor both to vistas overlooking the whole valley, camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, and famous sights such as the Ancient Bristlecone Forest on one side and Palisade Glacier on the other. Close by, the Owens River still flows, and a few of the large ranches are still operating, Glacier Lodge and the lakes of Big Pine Canyon on the west

offer beauties in green, gold, and white all year, contrasted by pinenut hunting, the University of California's research stations dramatically situated along the top of the White Mountains, and views of the desert basin and range country east over Westgard. Passes open into the Sierra backcountry, an outer space listening post wiggles its big ears nearby, and the elk still roam around trying to break into the alfalfa fields. No starched clothes from local clotheslines have been reported missing lately, though.

FISHING MAP


TO RENO
BODIE GHOST TOWN
MONTGOMERY PASS GAMBLING CASINO
MONO LAKE
LEE VINING
RTE 120
YOSEMITE
MONO CRATERS
BENTON
WHITE MTN RESEARCH
INYO CRATERS
GLASS MTN.
HWY 395
PETROGLYPH SITES
CHICAGO CNY. ROAD
MINES
PATRIARCH GROVE
DEVILS POSTPILE
SKI AREA
CONVICT LAKE
CROWLEY LAKE
BISHOP VOLCANIC TABLELAND
MAMMOTH LAKES
CHALFANT
FISH SLOUGH ROAD
HWY 6
SCHULMAN GROVE
WHITE MOUNTAIN RANGE
SIERRA VIEWPOINT
GRANDVIEW CAMPGROUND
PETROGLYPHS WHITE MTN CT (RUINS)
McGEE CREEK
HILTON CREEK
ROCK CREEK
PINE CREEK
LAWS RAILROAD MUSEUM
BISHOP
BISHOP CREEK
PINON NUTS
HWY 168
DEEPSPRINGS COLLEGE
KEOUGH HOT SPRINGS
KLONDIKE LAKE
OVRO
OLD TOLL STATION
BAKER CR.
JOSHUATREE FOREST
BIG PINE LAKES
BIG PINE
GLACIER LODGE
BIG PINE CR.
CRATER MTN.
BIG PINE VOLCANIC FIELDS
OWENS RIVER
SULPHUR PITS
EUREKA VALLEY
MARBLE CNY
EUREKA DUNES
BIRCH CR.
FISH SPRINGS HATCHERY
TINNEMAHA RESERVOIR
DEATH VALLEY NAT'L PARK
TINNEMAHA CR.
PETROGLYPHS
WILDLIFE VIEWPOINT
TABOOSE CR.
LAVA FLOWS
ABERDEEN
GOODALE CR.
REST AREA
LAVA FLOWS
N. FORK OAK CREEK
BLACK ROCK FISH HATCHERY
MT. WHITNEY FISH HATCHERY
SO. FORK OAK CR.
INDEPENDENCE
ONION VALLEY
EASTERN SIERRA MUSEUM
SALINE VALLEY
INYO MOUNTAIN RANGE
SIERRA
MANZANAR HIST. SITE
ALABAMA HILLS
MT. WHITNEY
WITNEY PORTAL
LONE PINE
DEATH VALLEY WEST ENTRANCE
DIAZ LAKE
WY 395
COTTONWOOD CHARCOAL KILNS
LEGEND
Campgrounds
Lakes
Hot Springs & Pool
NORTH

INYO COUNTY

BAKER: Take Highway 395 to the north end of Big Pine. Turn west on the county campground road just north of the city ball field and travel 1½ miles to the campgrounds. Fish are planted in the campground area.

BIG PINE CREEK: Turn west at the Texaco station in the center of Big Pine and continue to the top of the grade. The creek is planted from Sage Flat Campgrounds to Glacier Lodge.

BISHOP CREEK, LOWER: In Bishop, turn west at West Line Street onto Highway 168 and continue to Bullpit and Izaak Walton parks. Plants are made upstream from Bullpit Park to Powerline Road.

BISHOP CREEK, MIDDLE: Turn west of Highway 168 and continue 15 miles to Intake II. Trout are planted from Intake II to Cardinal Lodge and from Lake Sabrina downstream to the North Lake turnoff.

BISHOP CREEK, SOUTH FORK: From Bishop, turn west on Highway 168 and continue to the South Lake turnoff just below Intake II. Turn left at the fork. The creek is planted at access points from Habegger's to the U.S Forest Service Campgrounds and from Parker's Resort to Weir Lake.

COTTONWOOD CREEK: Turn west at the Cottonwood Power House turnoff about 10 miles south of Lone Pine. Keep to the left as you cross the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The creek is planted from the campgrounds at the power house intake to the end of the road.

DIAZ LAKE: Located on the west side of 395, 3 miles south of Lone Pine.

GEORGE CREEK: About 7 miles south of Independence, turn south on the small road, about a quarter-mile northwest of the Los Angeles Aqueduct crossing. The fish are planted at the sand trap.

GOODALE CREEK: 13 miles NORTH OF Independence at Aberdeen, turn west and continue past Old Hwy. 395. Fish are planted from Aberdeen Resort, upstream for 2 miles, and within the BLM Campgrounds.

INDEPENDENCE CREEK: Turn west just north of the Independence post office. The trout are planted from Independence Campground, a half-mile west of Independence to where the main road crosses the creek, above Seven Pines Village.

LONE PINE CREEK, UPPER: In Lone Pine, turn west at the traffic signal in the center of town onto Whitney Portal Road and continue up the grade for 13 miles. The fish are planted at the campgrounds along the creek from this point to the pond at Whitney Portal Store.

LONE PINE CREEK, LOWER: In Lone Pine, turn west at Whitney Portal Road. The creek is planted at access points from the Los Angeles Aqueduct to Lone Pine Campgrounds.

OWENS RIVER BELOW TINEMEHA RESERVOIR: 20 MILES NORTH OF Independence, turn east on Wildlife Viewpoint dirt road and continue about a quarter-mile to the water keeper's house. Turn south and continue a half-mile to the river. Fish are planted at locations below this point.

PINE CREEK: About 15 miles north of Bishop, turn off on Pine Creek Road and drive west to where the road crosses the creek. The creek is planted at this point up to where the road crosses it at the Union Carbide storage area.

PLEASANT VALLEY RESERVOIR: From Bishop drive north about 7 miles to sign indicating the reservoir turnoff. Turn right and continue about 1½ miles to barrier across road. Walk the short distance to dam. Reservoir is planted March through June, and September through November.

ROCK CREEK, SECTION III: Turn west at Toms Place, 30 miles north of Bishop on Rock Creek Road. Turn right when the road ends at Rock Creek Lake. The creek is planted from the first point where the road crosses the creek to the end of the road.

ROCK CREEK LAKE: Turn west at Toms Place and follow the road to the lake.

SABRINA LAKE: Turn west on Highway 168 in Bishop. Follow the signs to the lake, 20 miles southwest of Bishop.

SHEPERD CREEK: Turn east at the road with a cattle guard 5 miles south of Independence. Follow until it ends at the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Turn right and continue to the creek. The trout are planted at the sand trap, where the road meets the creek.

SOUTH LAKE: Turn west on Highway 168 in Bishop. Continue 15 miles to the South Lake Road turnoff. Turn left and drive 6 miles to the lake.

SYMMES CREEK: Turn west on the road just north of the Independence Post Office. Continue to Foothill Road and turn left. Follow the road to Symmes Creek Campground. The creek is stocked at the campground.

TABOOSE CREEK: 14 miles north of Independence, turn west at the Taboose Creek Campground sign. Turn left at the first road past Old Highway 395 and continue to the stream. The creek is stocked in the campgrounds from Old Highway 395 to 1 mile upstream.

TINEMEHA CREEK: Drive to 8 miles south of Big Pine and turn west at the South Fish Springs Hatchery road sign. Turn left on Tinemeha Creek Road and continue on this road to Inyo County Campgrounds. The creek is stocked at the Campgrounds.

TUTTLE CREEK: In Lone Pine, turn west at Whitney Portal Rlad, 3 miles to Horeshoe Meadow Road and turn left. Drive about 2 miles to the Tuttle Creek Campgrounds. The creek is planted at access points in the campgrounds.

MONO COUNTY

BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR: Turn north at Highway 182 at the southern city limits of Bridgeport and continue 3 miles to the lake.

BUCKEYE CREEK: At the west edge of Bridgeport, turn south at Twin Lakes Road for 8 miles and turn north on Buckeye Creek Road. Proceed 4 miles to where the road crosses the creek. The trout are planted from this location upstream and in Buckeye Campground.

CONVICT CREEK: 10 miles south of Mammoth Lakes, turn west on Convict Lake Road. The creek is planted from 395 to the campgrounds at the east end of Convict Lake.

CONVICT LAKE: 10 miles south of Mammoth Lakes turn west on Convict Lake Road. Continue 2 miles to the lake.

CROWLEY LAKE: The most popular eastern Sierra fishing lake. Crowley is 37 miles north of Bishop. Turn east at the Crowley Lake sign to enter at the south end of the lake. Drive farther north to Benton Crossing Road. Turn east and follow road to north lake entrance.

DEADMAN CREEK: 9 miles north of Mammoth Lake Junction, turn west on White Wing Camp Road and drive 6 miles to Deadman Campground. The creek is planted in the campground area.

ELLERY LAKE: About one quarter mile south of Lee Vining, turn west on Highway 120 (Tioga Pass Road). The lake is 12 miles distant on the south side of the road.

GEORGE LAKE: 12 miles north of Crowley Lake, turn west on Mammothe Lake Road. Drive past Twin Lakes and b ear left at the fork in the road to Lake Mary and follow the Forest Service signs to Lake.

GLASS CREEK: 10 miles north of Mammoth Lakes turn west on the road across from Crestview Maintenance Station. Continue for one half mile to the deer crossing. The stream is planted in the campground area north of the road.

GRANT LAKE: Turn west onto northern June Lake Loop Road and continue to the lake.

GREEN CREEK: 5 miles south of Bridgeport, turn west on Green Creek Road and continue for 8 miles to Dynamo Pond and turn right. Proceed 4 miles to the campground on left. Fish planted in campground.

WILDERNESS HIKING

Big Pine Canyon
Inyo National Forest

TRAILHEAD LOCATION
From Hwy 395, turn west on Crocker Street in Big Pine and continue approximately 10 miles to the end of the road. Overnight parking is located about ½ mile below the end of the road. Day use parking is at the end of the road.

NORTH FORK TRAIL DESCRIPTION
The North Fork trail offers access to Big Pine Lakes and the Palisade Glacier, the largest glacier in the Sierra. The Palisade Crest, rising above 14,000 feet, contains some of the finest alpine climbing in California. The Big Pine Lakes (or North Fork) trail zigzags through a slope of sagebrush, manzanita and Jeffrey pine before it reaches Second Falls then follows the creek to its headwaters. While walking through a forest of lodgepole pine, hikers will pass a cabin built by movie actor Lon Chaney. At a junction in the trail, you can head to Black Lake, where splendid views of the Palisade Glacier and Crest can be seen. The trail from Black Lake rejoins the main trail near Fourth Lake.

The main trail takes hikers past First, Second and Third Lakes. Third Lake is fed directly by the Palisade Glacier; its milky turquoise color is from the glacial powder carried from the melting glacier. The imposing dark mountain above Third Lake is Temple Crag. Fishing enthusiasts can find rainbow trout in most of the lakes in the canyon and golden trout in the higher lakes.

The trail to the Palisade Glacier is about ½ mile above Third Lake. Turn left and follow switchbacks along grassy benches and boulders to Sam Mack Meadow. The last ½ mile to the glacier requires boulder hopping and the trail is very obscure. Hikers can meander safely along the lower part of the glacier where the slope is gentle, but should avoid the upper reaches unless well experienced on ice and snow.

SOUTH FORK TRAIL DESCRIPTION
The South Fork trail climbs beneath the jagged peaks of the Middle Palisade Crest and provides access to the Middle Palisade Glacier. On the steep slopes below Willow Lake are a few gnarled limber pines stand along the trail. The few lakes in this drainage contain both brook and golden trout. The trail above Willow Lake becomes indistinct with rock cairns marking the way to the upper lakes.

BAKER CREEK TRAIL DESCRIPTION
The Baker Creek trail is now seldom used as the creek can be reached by a jeep road from Bishop, but it provides spectacular views of the Palisade Crest. The trail starts at a junction on the North Fork trail, about 1 ½ miles from the trailhead. It crosses a ridge and winds through a stand of Jeffrey pines and then climbs past Grouse Spring to a high point on a gentle ridge. Here views of the Middle Palisade and Disappointment Peak tower above the glacier. To the north are the high rolling meadows of Baker Creek and Coyote Flat, a remnant of an ancient plain that existed before warping and faulting formed the mountains of the Sierra Nevada.

Weather conditions can change rapidly in the Sierra Nevada. Hikers should carry ample clothing for the anticipated changes. It is recommended that all hikers boil water for 3 to 5 minutes or use a filtering system before drinking due to giardia in most of the waters.

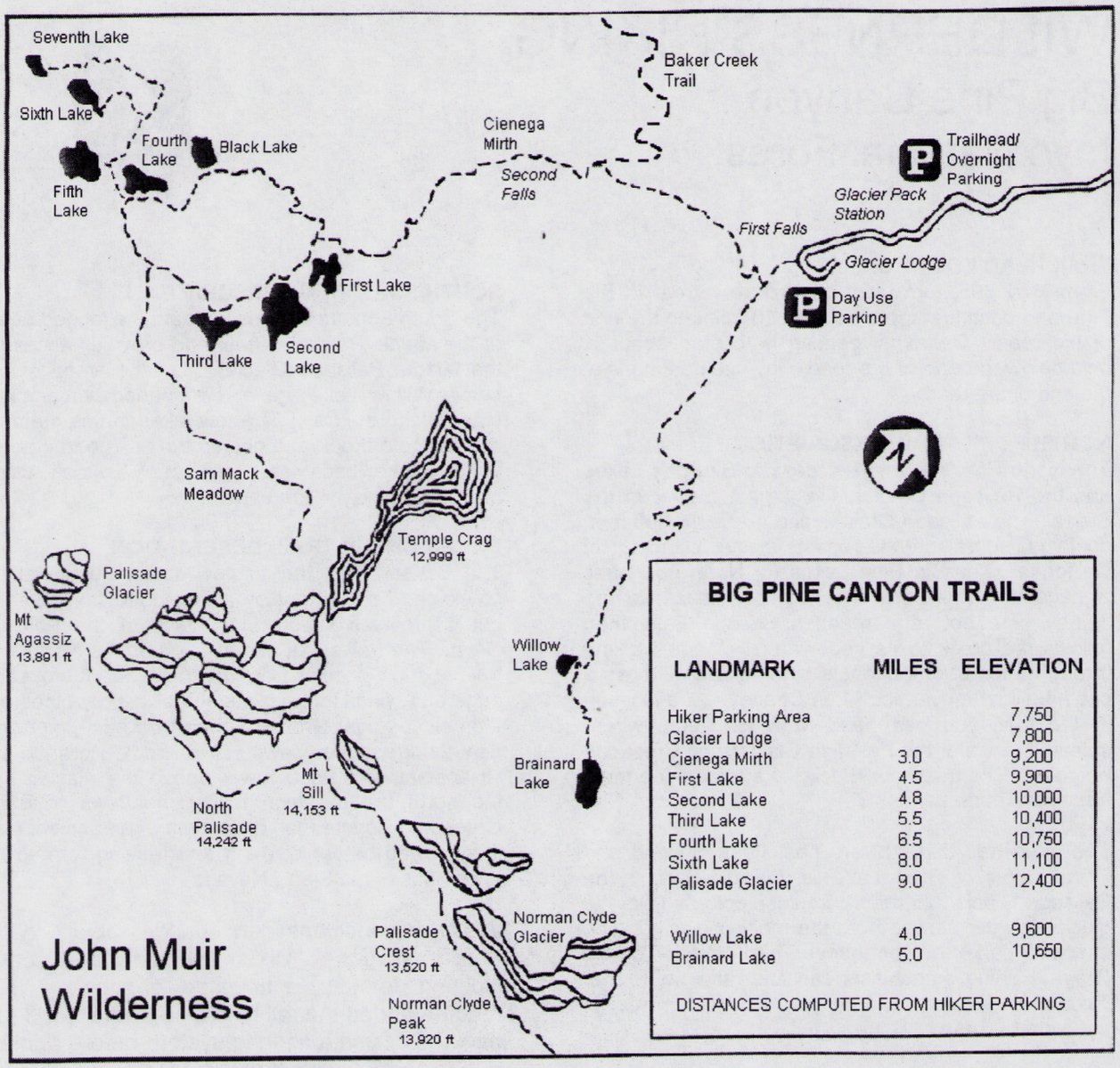
Pack stock often use trails in the Big Pine area. Please remember that stock have the right of way on all trails. Stand quietly off trail until all stock have passed to avoid spooking the animals.

PLEASE pack out all trash including empty bait containers.

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

White Mtn.
Ranger Station



BIG PINE CANYON TRAILS

LANDMARK	MILES	ELEVATION
Hiker Parking Area		7,750
Glacier Lodge		7,800
Cienega Mirth	3.0	9,200
First Lake	4.5	9,900
Second Lake	4.8	10,000
Third Lake	5.5	10,400
Fourth Lake	6.5	10,750
Sixth Lake	8.0	11,100
Palisade Glacier	9.0	12,400
Willow Lake	4.0	9,600
Brainard Lake	5.0	10,650

DISTANCES COMPUTED FROM HIKER PARKING

GUIDEBOOKS

Sierra South—100 Backcountry Trips by Thomas & Jason Winnett (Wilderness Press)
Best Short Hikes in California's Southern Sierra by Karen & Terry Whitehill (The Mountaineers)
Geology of the Sierra Nevada by Mary Hill (University of California Press)
The High Sierra: Peaks, Passes and Trails by R.J. Secor (The Mountaineers)

MAPS

USFS—John Muir Wilderness Map (topo)
USGS—Split Mountain 7.5 minute quad (topo)
North Palisade 7.5 minute quad (topo)
Coyote Flat 7.5 minute quad (topo)
Mt. Thompson 7.5 minute quad (topo)
Wilderness Press—Mt. Goddard (topo, 15 minute series)

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Big Pine Canyon

BIG PINE CANYON TRAILS

LANDMARK	MILES	ELEVATION
Hiker Parking Area		7,750
Glacier Lodge		7,800
Cienega Mirth	3.0	9,200
First Lake	4.5	9,900
Second Lake	4.8	10,000
Third Lake	5.5	10,400
Fourth Lake	6.5	10,750
Sixth Lake	8.0	11,100
Palisade Glacier	9.0	12,400
Willow Lake	4.0	9,600
Brainard Lake	5.0	10,650

DISTANCES COMPUTED FROM HIKER PARKING

EASTERN HIGH SIERRA — AREA MAP —

Area
Paiute-Shoshone Indian Cultural Center
Fairgrounds
AIRPORT
W. LINE ST.
E. LINE ST.
SCHOBER LANE
168
Bishop
ELEVATION 4,140 FT.
Bishop Golf Course
Sierra View Overlook
Westgard Pass
EL 7271
WINTER CLOSURE
Tom
3,652
Buttermilk Country
Intake II
Wheelchair access for fishing
Creek
BISHOP CREEK CANYON RECREATION AREA
North Lake
Bishop
BOAT LAUNCH
Lake Sabrina
South Lake
BOAT LAUNCH
Owens River
Year-round fishing
OWENS
Deep Springs Lake
to Eureka Valley
395
Klondike Lake
NATIONAL
Big Pine
DEATH VALLEY RD.
N
Big Pine Lakes
BIG PINE CANYON
Big Pine Creek
Crater Mtn.
EL 6055
Fish Springs Hatchery
Tule Elk Viewpoint
NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL
Mt. Agassiz
EL 13,893
PALISADE GLACIER
North Palisade
EL 14,242
Middle Palisade
EL 14,040
Tinemaha Reservoir
Wildlife Viewpoint
SCALE
0
5 MILES
10 MILES
SIERRA NEVADA
Red Mtn.
EL 5188
TINEMAHA CREEK RD.
Split Mtn.
EL 14,058
ABERDEEN STATION RD.
Cardinal Mtn.
EL 13,397
GOODALE RD.
Aberdeen
Mazourka Peak
EL 9441
Badger Flat
INYO MOUNTAINS
Roadside Rest
ABERDEEN RD.
FOREST
Owens River
Year-round fishing
VALLEY
SAWMILL CREEK RD.
Black Rock Hatchery
MAZOURKA CANYON
KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARK
Mt. Baxter
EL 13,125
Mt. Whitney Hatchery
WINNEDUMAH PAIUTE MONUMENT
EL 8369
Mt. Mary Austin
EL 13,048
Camp Independence
EASTERN CALIF. MUSEUM
KEARSARGE PASS
Kearsarge Peak
EL 12,598
Independence
MAZOURKA CANYON RD.
ONION VALLEY
Creek
Independence
ONION VALLEY RD.
Lower Owens River
Year-round fishing
University Peak
EL 13,632
CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP ZOOLOGICAL AREA
MANZANAR NATIONAL MONUMENT
Keynot Peak
EL 11,101
Alabama Gates
MOVIE RD.
ALABAMA HILLS
Mt. Williamson
EL 14,375
New York Butte
EL 10,688
PACIFIC CREST NAT'L
Lone Pine
WHITNEY PORTAL
WHITNEY PORTAL RD.
Lone Pine Creek
HORSETTLE CREEK RD.
Mt. Whitney Ranger Station
Mt. Whitney
Lone Pine Peak

CALIFORNIA LOCATION MAP

Reno
Lake Tahoe
395
Yosemite Nat'l Park
Mono Lake
120
Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest
168
Mammoth
BISHOP
Big Pine
Independence
Lone Pine
136
190
Death Valley Nat'l Park
NEVADA
CALIFORNIA
Fresno
99
395
Bakersfield
178
14
58
15
Las Vegas
Santa Barbara
126
14
101

VISITOR INFORMATION

BISHOP CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VISITORS CENTER
619-873-8405
690 N. Main Street, Bishop, CA 93514
Corner of Hwy. 395 & Park Ave.
HOURS:
Monday - Friday 9 to 5
Saturday - Sunday 10 to 4

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BIG PINE CREEK CANYON CAMPING
Inyo National Forest

ROADS AND PARKING – Paved roads and parking lots service the day-use areas, trailheads and campgrounds in Big Pine Canyon.

PERMITS AND CAMPSITES

FAMILY CAMPGROUNDS There are three fee facilities in this canyon. To camp, select a vacant site, return to the self-service station at the entrance to the campground and obtain a permit. Return to your site and attach the permit to the numbered post in front of your site. Many of the family campsites are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. There are two campgrounds at which you may reserve a site—Big Pine Creek and Upper Sage Flat. To make reservations, call 1-877-444-6777 or log onto www.recreation.gov

Your permit expires at 1:00 pm. To retain the site for additional nights, renew your permit by 1:00 pm.

GROUP SITES There are two group sites in this canyon available by reservation only. They are the Palisade/Glacier and Clyde/Glacier campgrounds. To reach the reservation system, call 1-877-444-6777 or through the internet at www.recreation.gov.

FIRST FALLS WALK-IN CAMPGROUND
This free campground can be reached by parking in the backpacker parking lot and hiking approximately one mile on the North Fork trail. Five sites have tables, fire rings and a pit toilet. Be sure to treat the mountain water with a filter.

PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

BEARS Black bears are present in Big Pine Creek Canyon. Bears consider anything with an odor to be food. All food or trash should be stored and disposed of properly.

CAMPING In this area, camping is limited to established sites in developed campgrounds only. Be sure your site is in one of these marked campgrounds.

CAMPFIRES Build campfires only in designated steel fireplaces provided by the Forest Service. Rock fire rings are not permitted. Dead and downed wood may be gathered from the ground, but the use of wood from standing dead or live trees and shrubs is prohibited.

TRASH DISPOSAL Trash bins are located close to campground entrances. Please do your part to keep the campgrounds clean.

CLEANING FISH Clean fish well away from water sources, including water hydrants and restrooms. Wrap and deposit entrails in trash bins.

NOISE Sound from radio, TV and musical instruments must be confined to your campsite. Public address systems and portable speakers may not be used. Please do not run generators more than necessary. Quiet time is from 10 pm to 6 am.

RESTROOMS Please do not use restrooms for trash disposal, diapers, garbage, sanitary napkins, etc. Take such refuse to the nearest trash bin. Please help keep restrooms clean for other users.

PETS Pets must be on a 6-foot leash and under physical control at all times or be caged. While hiking on National Forest trails, pets must be on leash or under voice command at all times.

WATER Remember, hydrants are a water source only. Use a bucket or pan to obtain water for dishwashing or personal hygiene.

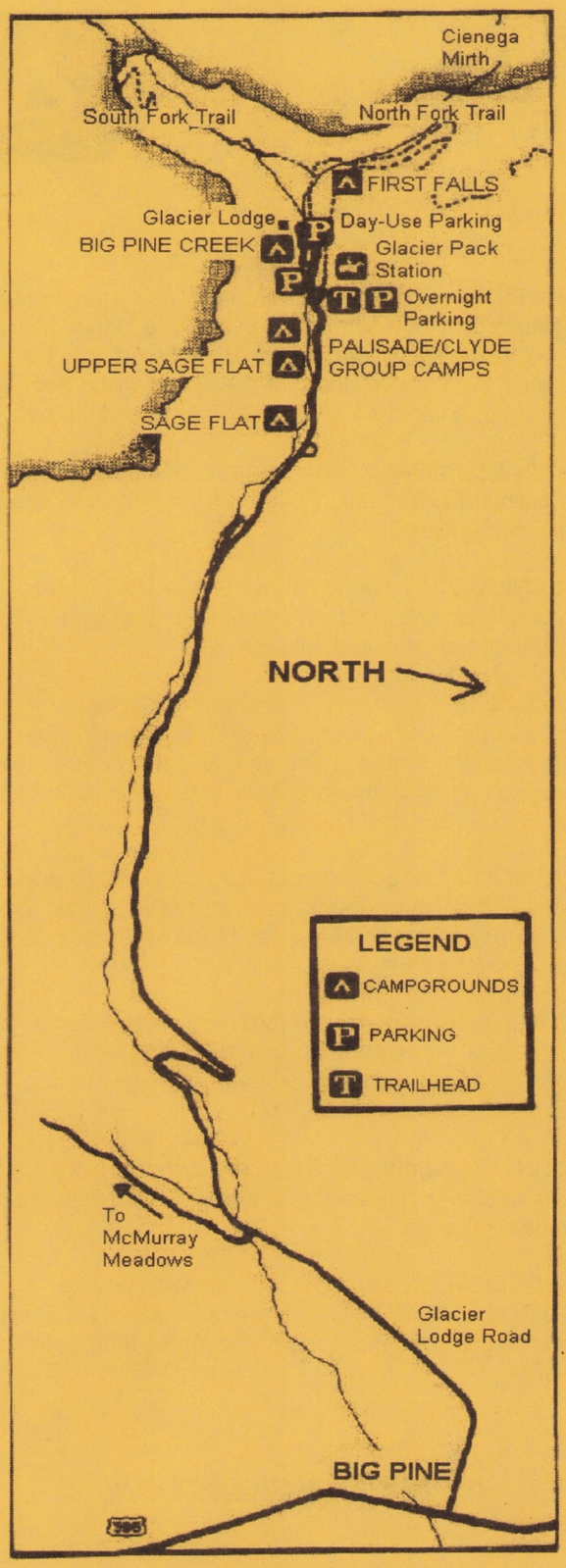
VANDALISM Please report all observed acts of vandalism IMMEDIATELY to the nearest Forest Service officer or campground host with as much information as possible.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 911

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

White Mtn. Ranger District



BIG PINE CANYON CAMPING

Forest service campgrounds in Big Pine Canyon include Big Pine Creek, Upper Sage Flat, Sage Flat, First Falls Walk-in and two group campgrounds—Palisade Glacier and Clyde Glacier. Big Pine Creek and Upper Sage Flat have reservable sites and both group sites require reservations. To reach the reservations system, call 1-877-444-6777 or log onto www.recreation.gov Family campsites not on the reservation system are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

BIG PINE CANYON – THE GLACIERS

Big Pine Canyon is the location of the southernmost glaciers in the United States, and the largest glaciers in the Sierra Nevada.

Palisade Glacier sits at the base of the Palisade Crest in the North Fork Basin. Climbers and hikers are familiar with the impressive wall of 13,000- and 14,000-foot peaks. Most notable are North Palisade (14,242 ft), Mt. Sill (14,162 ft), Mt. Agassiz (14,891 ft) and Mt. Winchell (13,768 ft.).

Middle Palisade Glacier, dominated by 14,040 foot Middle Palisade, is found in the South Fork Basin.

Glacier melt from Palisade and Middle Palisade glaciers produces the unique turquoise hue of First, Second, Third and Finger Lakes.

Both North and South Fork trails provide spectacular scenery and are well worth at least a day hike during your stay in the canyon. No wilderness permit is needed for day trips, but a permit is required for overnight stays in the backcountry.

Facilities and services available in the Big Pine Canyon include lodging, RV park, meals, pack station, picnic area and limited groceries.

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Looking down canyon from Mount Tinemaha towards Red Lake and Split Mountain.

Craig Jackson
COLUMNIST

(Hiked on June 26, 2020)

The peakbagging adventures continue, this time to another peak clearly visible from U.S. Highway 395 and west of the town of Big Pine. Overshadowed by its big brother to the west, 14,058-foot Split Mountain, Mt. Tinemaha isn't as tall and majestic, but the climb to its summit is one hundred percent enjoyable and rewarding. It would be another all day outing with Sarah and Peter, something I've grown quite accustomed to doing lately.

This time around, instead of leaving our homes in Bishop ghastly early in the morning, we opted to car camp at the Red Lake trailhead. Our two-Subaru caravan left Bishop on that Friday evening at 5 p.m. and drove due south for 15 miles to Big Pine. After a quick stop at a gas station for supplies, we took off westbound on Glacier Lodge Road, eventually turning left onto McMurray Meadows Road a few miles later.

For the next 16 miles or so, we followed the rocky-in-spots dirt road southbound in a westerly fashion, then finally reaching the Red Lake trailhead. There are no signs leading to this desolate starting point, but there were three burnt-out cars marking the beginning of the hike. We parked accordingly, and immediately started getting ready to go to sleep, since we planned on getting up at 3 a.m. and starting the hike under a moonlit sky no later than 4 a.m.

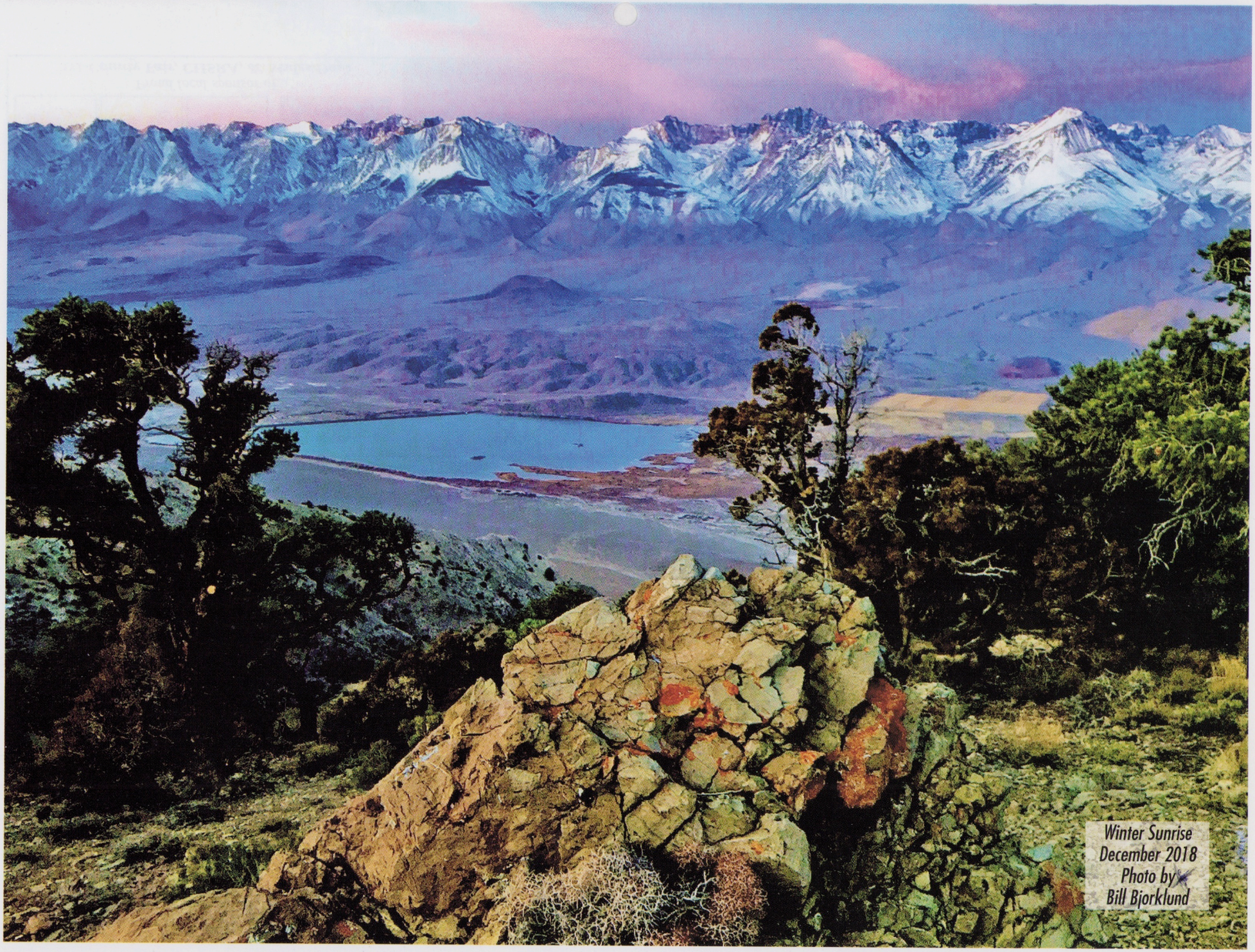
Our plans worked out perfectly, we got a somewhat good night's sleep and were on the trail at exactly 3 a.m. with our headlamps shining brightly. The Red Lake Trail is definitely not one of the busy Eastern Sierra trails that is frequented by hordes of humans on a summer weekend. First, the drive to the trailhead is not an easy dirt road for all motor vehicles and the hike to Red Lake gains about 4000 feet in less than four miles. We weren't just going to Red Lake though, our goal was extremely loftier.

There is a definite advantage to hiking in the dark, the uphill portions seem to not be as difficult, or maybe I was just dreaming. It wasn't yet 6 a.m. when we arrived at ultra incredible Red Lake, directly below colorful and magnificent Split Mountain. I thought Bright Dot Lake near Mt. Baldwin was amazing the week before, but Red Lake below Split Mountain on a clear calm morning was equally as impressive.

After watching Peter do some fly fishing, the real fun began. Red Lake was the end of the actual trail, from here to the summit of Mt. Tinemaha was mostly talus and loose dirt. We started up immediately, heading in a northeast direction, carefully stepping on one rock at a time. Our goal was in sight up canyon, but our immediate objective was the north ridge on top of a massive bowl. For a second, it looked quite insurmountable, but the closer we got, the more confident I became.

Peter led the way up the very steep sandy slope, over and around human-size boulders and eventually onto the summit of 12,561-foot Mt. Tinemaha. I couldn't believe I actually made it because it was tough haul of over 6,000 feet of elevation gain in the High Sierra. We were very proud of ourselves, accomplishing and succeeding what we set out to do. It was a great feeling!

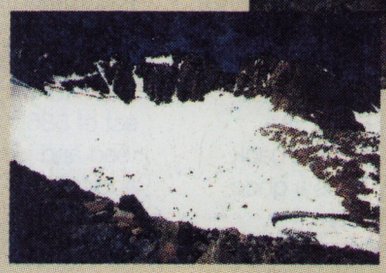
The small summit area was a perfect mountain top, which we enjoyed for well over an hour. Reluctantly, we had to depart because we had a long hike back to our cars. It would take two hours to carefully scramble back down the same direction to Red Lake. It was exhausting, to say the least. Peter fished again for at least an hour while Sarah and I relaxed and talked, but we knew we still had a tough downhill hike ahead of us. In the end, it was another 15-hour day spent in our Sierra Nevada, and one I'll definitely think about for a very long time.


Winter Sunrise
December 2018
Photo by
Bill Bjorklund

PALISADE GLACIER

(Southernmost Glacier in the Western Hemisphere)

The Palisade Glacier is a popular attraction for the well conditioned hiker/backpacker who can brave the challenging trek from the trailhead some 9.5 miles away.

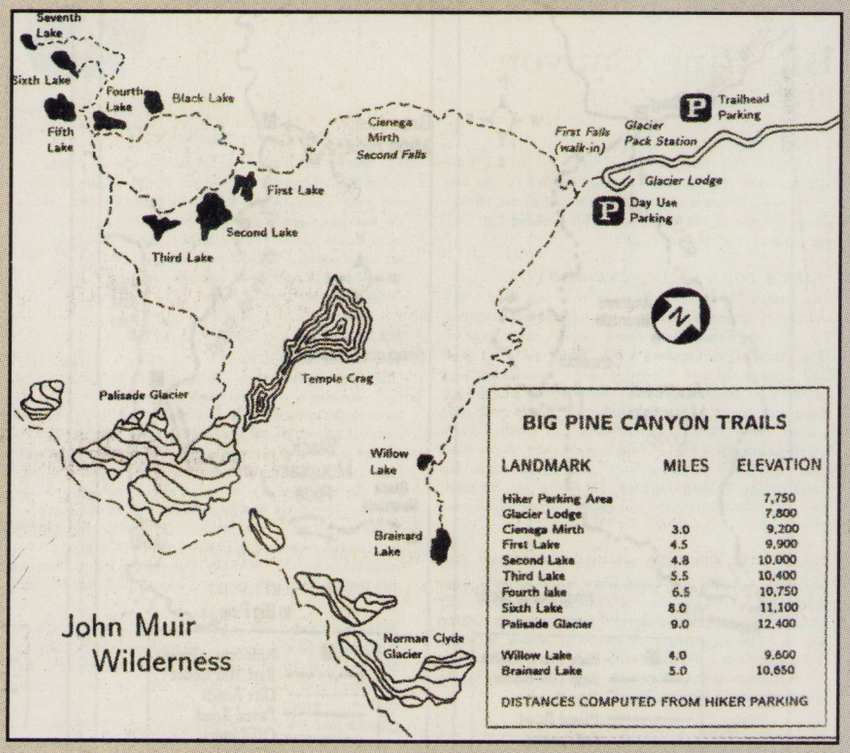


THE NORTH FORK TRAIL offers access to Big Pine Lakes and the Palisade Glacier, the largest glacier in the Sierra. The Palisade Crest rising above 14,000 ft. contains some of the finest alpine climbing in California. The Big Pine Lakes trail zigzags through a slope of sage, manzanita, and jeffrey pine before it reaches second falls and follows along the creek to its headwaters. The flowers in early summer are abundant along the path leading into the canyon. Hikers will pass a stone cabin built by movie actor Lon Chaney while walking through a forest of lodgepole pine. A junction in the trail will go up to Black Lake, where splendid views of the Palisade Glacier and Crest can be seen. The trail from Black Lake will rejoin the main trail near 4th Lake. Following the main trail will take hikers along past Lakes 1,2, & 3. Third Lake is fed directly from the Palisade Glacier, which causes its milky turquoise color from the glacial powder carried down from the melting glacier. The imposing dark mountain above 3rd Lake is Temple Crag, Fishermen can find rainbow trout in most of the lakes in the canyon with the higher lakes containing golden trout. Be sure to carry out all empty bait containers and trash while hiking or fishing.

THE TRAIL TO THE PALISADE GLACIER is about 1/2 mile above 3rd lake. Turn left and follow switchbacks up among grassy benches and boulders to Sam Mack Meadow. Whitebark Pine survives the climate up high with several types of alpine flowers growing on the seemingly soil-less area. About the last 1/2 mile to the glacier requires much boulder hopping and the trail is very obscure. Hikers can meander safely along the lower part of the glacier where the slope is gentle, but should avoid the upper reaches unless well experienced on ice and snow.

(If you are planning an overnight trip you MUST obtain a permit from the Forest Service. You can contact the White Mountain Ranger Station in Bishop at (760) 873-2500)

The Big Pine Trailhead is mere 11 mile drive up Big Pine Canyon from downtown Big Pine up Crocker Avenue/Glacier Lodge Road. The trailhead sits directly next to Glacier Lodge where rustic cabins and a number of campgrounds are available. The fishing is great either in the Big Pine Creek or Glacier Lodge's small fishing pond fed by the Big Pine Creek. The views are spectacular and hiking to the Big Pine Lakes and other backcountry lakes is an incredible experience. By using the North Fork Trail one can hike to Hidden Lakes, Baker Lake, Black Lake and Thunder and Lightning Lake while the South Fork Trail will take you to Willow and Brainard Lakes.



BIG PINE CANYON TRAILS

LANDMARK	MILES	ELEVATION
Hiker Parking Area		7,750
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Willow Lake	4.0	9,600
Brainard Lake	5.0	10,650

DISTANCES COMPUTED FROM HIKER PARKING

High above the vast Eastern Sierra, majestic mountain peaks loom over the Owens Valley. Seen here is the Palisade Glacier area, west of Big Pine. *Photo by Brian O'Boyle*

Palisade Glacier

Palisades Glacier area

SACRED SCENE: TEMPLE CRAG STRADDLES THE DRAINAGES OF BIG PINE CREEK.

ALPINE VIEWS

Big Pine Creek North Fork Trail, John Muir Wilderness, CA

Pass five alpine lakes on this 7.4-mile (one-way), high-country out-and-back to Sixth Lake. From the North Fork Pine Creek trailhead, trek 3.4 miles west along a sagebrush-carpeted canyon. Enter a pine forest and revel in the heights of 12,999-foot Temple Crag (which offers 5.7 to 5.10 trad climbing). Pass First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Lakes—made green by the runoff of glacial silt—and walk another mile to Sixth Lake at 11,090 feet. See the 13,000-foot granite peaks of the Inconsolable Range and Fourteeners Mt. Sill and North Palisade reflected on its leprechaun waters (cast a line for rainbow trout). Pitch your tent below the cliffs on the western shore and awake early to catch the sunrise alpenglow reflecting off the glassy waters. **Contact** 760 873-2400; bit.ly/JohnMuirWild

OLD WATER DITCH

2016 Bob Larson

PERLITE MINE

Rates

	Summer	Holiday
Cabins (2 night minimum)		
Price quotes are for double occupancy		
All Cabins (for 2)	$70.00	$75.00
Addl. Person	$15.00	$18.00
Trailer Park		
Showers included	$15.00	$18.00
Pets (Cabins Only)		
Per Stay	$15.00	

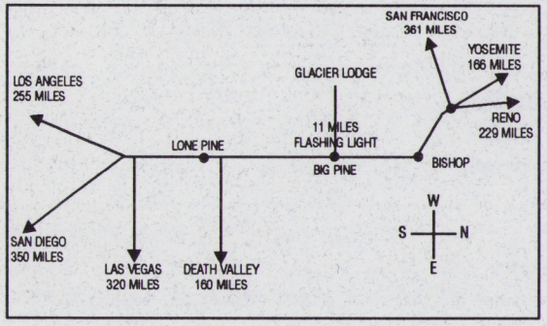
Overnight Hikers Parking $3.00

(for general public, inquire at General Store)
Free parking for all Glacier Lodge guests

For Information or Reservations
Call or Write

Glacier Lodge

P.O. Box 370
Big Pine, CA 93513
Phone (760) 938-2837
www.jewelofthesierra.com



Glacier Lodge is located on U S D A Forest Service Land

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Glacier Lodge

in
Big Pine, California
has it all!

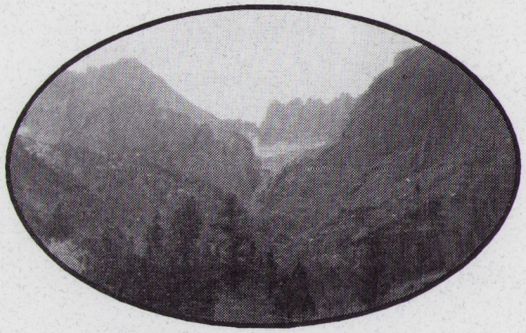
Cabins
Restaurant
General store

Hiking
Fishing
Showers
Camping
Trailer park

Ice Climbing
Rock Climbing
Guided Tours
John Muir Trail
Palisades Glacier
Glacier Pack Train

Bristle Cone Pine Forest,
located off Highway 168

Glacier Lodge



Jewel of the Sierra

Open mid April
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Escape the daily grind!

A small touch of civilization at the edge of wilderness.....

Glacier Lodge, an historic mountain retreat originally built in 1917, offers you no phones, no television and no grind!

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Fishing and "Kodak Moments" are everywhere! With over a hundred thousand acres of wilderness terrain to explore, our seasonal colors of Spring, Summer and Autumn are *always* bursting at the seams.

Private guided tours are available from experienced, world-class mountain climbers such as John Fischer and Todd Vogel. Discover for yourself the hidden and challenging wonders of the Sierra Nevada Range. The challenge still remains.

If you prefer, the Glacier Pack Train with their team of horses and mules, can take you and your party into the depths of the Eastern Sierra. It's the easy way to see the back country!

Call Glacier Lodge for more information.

General Information

All cabins are fully equipped with showers, kitchens and some kitchen utensils. Towels and linens are provided. There is no daily maid service. Fresh towels may be exchanged at the front desk.

Public showers are available. Daily hours are 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. only at $4.00 per person. Price includes towel, soap and bath mat. The campground is equipped with semi-private bathroom, water, and electricity (for light only). A few sites have sewer hook-ups. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m. Check-out time is 12:00 noon. Prices do not include tax and gratuity.

Important

Glacier Lodge generates its own electricity. For your safety and ours, appliances of any kind are forbidden! If you have special needs please inquire beforehand and we will try to accommodate you. Due to the remoteness of our location, services are limited. There is no public telephone, no television and no swimming pool.

Deposit Requirements

1. The full amount of the first night's reservation is required in advance. Credit card, money orders or cash only is accepted - no checks, please.
2. A seven (7) day cancellation notice is required for a full refund.
3. No refunds will be given on any cancellation received within seven (7) days of your reservation.
4. No refunds will be issued for early check-outs.

BIRTHDAY SUMMONS

The Album Summer 1994

by Willma Willis Gore

Trout Ponds on Giroux Apple Ranch west of Big Pine. Photos courtesy of Clarice Uhlmeyer.

AND IN BIG PINE, 1928

My only vivid memory of the year 1928 is seeing my mother, Elva Willis, skirt knotted around her thighs, frantically scooping floppy trout from the roiling brown water of one of the ranch fishponds.

We lived on the Giroux Ranch then, a couple of miles west of Big Pine in the Sierra foothills, north of the Big Pine Creek channel. Although apples were the main crop of the ranch Roland Giroux, the owner, had also installed ponds for trout which, like the apples, were under the supervision of my father, Roy.

Early on the morning of June 5, 1928 Dad was the first one to see a fan of brown ditch water invading the clear water of the fish pond. I knew something terrible was happening when I heard him shout to Mother, "Save some fish if you can."

As I ran out to the pond, Dad was disappearing south along the brimming banks of the ditch, heading for Big Pine Creek, our main water supply and surely the source of the strangely muddy flow.

Mother had brought two large buckets to the edge of the pond. She knew that I, barely six years old, would not be able to carry them filled with water. So she called instructions to me to get a smaller lard pail from the kitchen and use it to fetch clear water from the nearby spring. I ran as fast as I could, impelled by the urgency in her voice, and I was fascinated to see the pink gills of the ten-inch trout flare frantically as I emptied my small pails of water over them.

Though Mother saved a few fish, our salvage operation was pretty futile considering that the pond held hundreds of trout. The event was an alarming contrast to the pleasant activities of the previous day. June 4th, the day before, was my birthday and mother had put on a lovely party for me. Among my friends who attended were cousin Mary Elizabeth Willson (Thomas), now of Big Pine, Velma Connor (Zimmerman) deceased, Madelyn Smith (Clark), now of Bishop, and Marie Pellissier (Wiles).

Today (1994), Marie, retired from the Kings County Department of Health and living in Hanford, California has special reason to remember my 6th birthday party.

The Pellissiers were sheep ranchers in Big Pine, and had been enjoying a camping vacation on Big Pine Creek, about three miles above town. On the morning of June 4th, Frank, Marie's father, was coaching her younger brother David in the fine points of fishing. Marie's mother, Ellen, was reading and enjoying the soothing melodies of rushing water at their stream-side campsite. They planned to remain at the camp several days more.

Despite the contentment of her family, Marie wasn't happy. More than anything else she wanted to attend the birthday party of her friend, Willma, that afternoon. The chattering squirrels and white-water stream had no appeal for her compared with ice cream and cake

and the company of her friends. Already six years old, Marie wanted to welcome me to the "distinguished company" of that age. She was determined that her family return to Big Pine in time for her to don her party dress for the afternoon affair at the Giroux Ranch.

Marie remembers that she tried relentlessly to persuade her mother that they should leave the campsite. When she realized she was getting nowhere with Ellen, she greeted her father's return from a morning of fishing with her pleas. Her persuasive charms worked on Frank Pellissier. They broke camp and brought a happy Marie to my party.

Had the family remained at their campsite on Big Pine Creek for the planned duration of their vacation, they might well have numbered among the next day's casualties of the rampaging stream.

At 5 a.m. the morning of June 5, nature, gravity and human error combined to send more than 100,000 cubic yards of water-saturated earth sliding off the south side of its canyon into Big Pine Creek.

The *Inyo Independent* of Saturday, June 9, 1928 reported the catastrophe on the front page under the headline, THREE MISSING IN STRANGE BIG PINE DISASTER.

"Caused by the giving away of a water-soaked embankment early Tuesday morning, a torrent of mud and water carrying with it death and destruction, flowed down Big Pine Creek. Three lives are known to have been lost and property damage amounting to many thousands of dollars took place.

'The known dead are Lee Wiggins, 31 years, a resident of Los Angeles, William Wiggins, his son, age 14, and F.M. Ritchey of Ventura, CA. Their bodies have not been recovered." The Wiggins were camped with their friend F.S. Connors, also of Los Angeles, along the creek a little below Sage Flat, about three miles below Glacier Lodge. Connors reported that he was awakened by the roar of the oncoming flow. He called to the Wiggins father and son to run for high ground as he frantically scrambled up the canyon side. Turning to look back he saw that the Wigginses had not followed him. Instead, they had climbed to the roof of their car. As Connors watched, the trunk of a large tree suspended in the flowing mud struck the car and the two were thrown into the muddy stream.

The other fatality, Ritchey, was camped with a friend, R.H. Rhine of Long Beach farther down stream, not far from the campsite abandoned the day before by the Pellissier family. Rhine and Ritchey were still asleep when the "liquid hillside" roared down toward them. Rhine was swept along in the flood but managed to grasp the trunk of a tree. He struggled out and climbed above the flow.

Above: David Pellisier

Below: 6-yr. old Willma and sister Janet

As soon as the news reached Big Pine, a rescue party was organized under Forest Supervisor Roy Boothe and Ranger Brainard. The men worked their way up the canyon and searched throughout Tuesday and Wednesday for bodies and/or marooned campers. Rhine was found and taken to Keough Hot Springs where Dr. Loundagin treated him for abrasions and lacerations.

"The father and mother of Mr. Ritchey and the young lady to whom he was shortly to have been married, arrived Wednesday to assist in the search . . ." the paper reported.

According to Dr. C.F. Tolman, then a professor of geology at Stanford University, "This type of mud flow is unusual. In this country we are familiar with cloud burst mud flows, but flows of a great mass of earth due to irrigation are not common. There was no landslide in the strict sense of the word, but merely a flow of soil made fluid by the application of water."

Geologist Tolman's account of the disaster stressed that, in his opinion, the Sage Flats area on the Steward Ranch was "super saturated by excessive irrigation." The flats were a brush and grass-covered slope on the canyon side above Big Pine Creek. "Just below the point where the flow started, there is a 'dike' of boulders . . . deposited at the mouth of a steep tributary canyon on the south side of Big Pine Creek. The boulders helped hold back the saturated ground ... The so-called flats themselves slope steeply towards the creek, and at the creek bank there is a steep terrace or cliff 10 to 20 feet high. Irrigation water from a ditch on the flats cut numerous gullies, some fairly deep, at the edge. One of these gullies just above the 'dike' of boulder ... apparently cut deep and tapped the water-saturated land. This released the water soaked mass, which flowed out into Big Pine Creek, and left a great cut 700 feet long, 200 feet wide, with sides varying from 12 to 40 feet high..."

No one was more astonished than Sage Flat owners, Joe and Jim Steward. Since 1903 they had run their cattle here. They had brought water via open ditch from higher on Big Pine Creek to the upper edge of the flat to irrigate their pasture. Surplus water drained off the slope and returned to the creek. The water had been turned into the upper irrigation ditch some weeks before.

'Why the earth movement should have occurred at this particular time is a mystery," continued the *Inyo Independent*. 'There had been no cloud-burst and no unusual run-off from the higher country. It is apparent, however, that the ground became over-saturated, probably from over-irrigation and that the creek bank gave way letting the liquid mass escape into the stream bed. Joe Steward who, with his wife, occupied

Above: Swimming party at the trout pond.

Below: Marie Pellisier (Wiles), Willma Willis (Gore), and Lucille Lewis (Smith) c. 1939

a cabin a short distance above the flat, says that he crossed the land the evening before the break and that it appeared in its usual condition. There was no unusual sound when the break occurred, according to Mr. Steward..." It was those camped on the creek below who heard the booms of crashing boulders and uprooted trees as the powerful mud flow cut through the canyon.

If it was a mystery to the Stewards, we can imagine the astonishment of Big Pine residents who wakened on June 5 to find the town's main street several inches deep in mud and the surrounding lowlands awash.

The intake for the power plant on Big Pine Creek was put out of commission and the watchman's cabin swept away. The town water system failed and clean water had to be hauled from springs on the ranch of A.O. Brown, west of Big Pine.

The bridge that carried what is now Highway 395 across Big Pine Creek at the south end of town was washed out. The state highway department under the direction of Division Engineer Somner began restoration of the bridge and highway immediately.

A force of City of Los Angeles employees under the supervision of E.H. Leahey rushed to the scene to repair the intake and assist in restoring transportation routes. By Thursday morning water was turned into the town mains again but householders were warned not to use it for drinking or food preparation until cleared by County Health Officer Crook. It was several months before the waters of Big Pine Creek were free of sediment and the community restored to normal.

Although the incident of helping my mother try to rescue the trout in our Giroux Ranch ponds is a clear memory, I did not really understand at the time the connection between my 6th birthday party and the Big Pine Creek mud flow.

In the late 1970s, I, like Marie, was living in the San Joaquin Valley. We had always kept in touch though we had not visited together since high school when her family, like mine, had moved to Lone Pine. We made a date to meet for lunch in Visalia, midway between Hanford, where she lived, and Porterville, my home. Mother Ellen also came along.

Ellen Pellissier died in Hanford in 1993. David, who was about four years old at the time of the flood, now lives with his wife in Big Pine.

As we happily reviewed various memories of the old days in Owens Valley, Marie and Ellen reiterated the story of the Big Pine Creek Flood and the importance of my 1928 party invitation to the whole Pellissier family.

Only then did I learn that Marie's determination to attend my party brought the Pellissiers out of the canyon the day before the disaster. Around our lunch table we agreed that we were pretty lucky to be able to have a reunion more than 50 years after my 6th birthday. ❋

The birthday party: Back row, Kathleen Turner, Willma Willis (Gore), Barbara Jean Kixmiller, Miss Harris (1st grade teacher) holding Janet Willis (deceased); center row, Barbara Ahrens (Crawford), Madelyn Smith (Clark), Velma Connor (Zimmerman) (deceased); Marie Pellisier (Wilies), Vivian Stone, Mary Willson (Thomas), Tom Uhlmeyer; front row, (unknown - possibly Jess Chance, Jr.), Vivienne Chance, (unknown), Edith Smith (Henderson), Adele Uhlmeyer.

On the track of the Palisade Glacier ... up and up and up

9-29-1996

BIG PINE, Calif.—I had discovered Glacier Lodge as a small notation on a map of the Eastern Sierra. But it turned out that I was only one of many to have found this small nine-room, 10-cabin lodge at the end of a paved road leading out of Big Pine into the Inyo National Forest.

The map showed that it was set high, surrounded by 13,000- and 14,000-foot peaks. It also was very close to the John Muir trail and the Palisade Glacier, billed as the largest glacier in the Sierra Nevada. I had never seen a glacier before, and this one seemed easily accessible. Or so I thought.

My 13-year-old daughter, Meera, and I started our journey on a Friday afternoon, leaving the smoldering San Fernando Valley and heading up California 14, past the burnt oranges, ochres and rust-colored Red Rock Canyon. As we sped by on the curving freeway, I made a mental note to return to explore the park's geologic land forms. But we were in a hurry—we had gotten a late start and had miles to go before we were to meet my sister, Madhavi, and her husband, Alan, at the Winnedumah Hotel in Independence, about 30 miles south of Big Pine.

The next morning, after a breakfast of fruit, cereal and toast, our party of four left Independence and headed up California 395 to Big Pine. After awhile, we made a left and drove into Big Pine canyon, climbing steep and deep against the swift current of Big Pine Creek, which flowed beside us. After we made a few curves and hairpin turns, Glacier Lodge came into view on the left. The wood structure looks like a ski lodge, with a steep, pitched roof the color of oxidized copper. Neon beer signs blazed in the window, even at 10 a.m., and people, some carrying backpacks, were going in and out its doors.

It was too early for check-in, so we decided to tackle the trail to the Middle Palisade Glacier—10 miles round-trip—and be back in time for what was touted to be a four-star dinner at the lodge. But first meals first. What about lunch? A T-shirted man at the front desk answered our query with bag lunches and told us we could put the tab on our room bill after we checked in later that afternoon. It was time to hit the trail.

We crossed back over the bridge, past a pond where several children were fishing, and picked up the trail to the left, as it followed the North Fork of Big Pine Creek.

Los Angeles Times

The beginning was but a taste of what was to come: steep. We were following the creek to its source, at about 11,000 feet, in the glaciers that were the object of my curiosity. The trail's pitch got even steeper, but after what seemed the 100th switchback, it crossed Second Falls and leveled off for a bit. We walked through stands of Jeffrey and lodgepole pine, and meadows filled with such a profusion of wildflower blooms that I went running for a field guide later that weekend. I could at least identify the daisies and the lemony-scented angelica. Quaking aspens shivered as we walked by.

We only saw a few people on the trail; several backpackers planning to camp up at the alpine lakes crisscrossed our paths. We ate lunch on a creek-side boulder. I was ravenous, and our lunches of bread, Cheddar cheese, chips and fruit were scarfed down. We munched homemade gorp.

Soon after, we started the second series of switchbacks that signaled our climb into the basin of the glacier and the numerically named Big Pine Lakes. I seriously started to doubt my ability to make it up to Fourth Lake, at about 10,500 feet, and the Middle Palisade Glacier. After a brief consultation with the fitter members of the troop, we decided to push on to First Lake and quit there. Time was a factor: It was about 2 p.m. and we still had to make it down in time for dinner.

About 2:30 that afternoon, we caught a glimpse of a small, still aquamarine lake through the trunks of the lodgepole pine trees surrounding it. On cue, a fish did a half-gainer out of the water, and we sank gratefully down on the banks, admiring the view. Those switchbacks were easier to handle going down, and we made it back by 6 o'clock, giving us just enough time to check in and shower before dinner.

We were given cabin 11, a small

Budget for Four

Winnedumah Hotel, 2 rooms	$119.90
Glacier Lodge cabin	109.00
Trail lunches	19.80
Dinner at lodge	141.44
Breakfast	20.16
Gas	14.04
FINAL TAB	**$424.34**

Glacier Lodge, RD 10, Big Pine, CA 93513; telephone (619) 938-2837.

over

three-room wood structure with a kitchen—equipped with stove, table-top refrigerator, sink, table and some dishes and silverware—one queen-size bed and two twins. There was a bathroom with stand-up shower. In another corner was a small heater, which we didn't use because it never got cold enough. Decor was brown: brown paneling, brown carpet. Pastel green quilts livened up the room and a wicker armchair sat by the door.

Lighting was a major problem in that dark cabin. One bare, dim bulb hung from a corner and a lamp stood beside it. There was no radio or TV, which suited me just fine. The place was bare bones and needed cosmetic work. But it was clean and the water heater held enough hot water to wash the trail grime off all four of us. The lodge is run on hydroelectric power harnessed from Big Pine Creek and guests are warned not to use appliances, including hair dryers.

We paid $70 per night for the cabin with two people, and added $30 for my sister and brother-in-law. I peered into a guest room in the main lodge later that weekend; it was charmingly decorated in a country touch, wallpapered and had firmer beds than in our cabin. Although some have shared baths, they were cheaper, about $65 a night for two. I'd stay there next time.

Our dinner reservations were for 8 p.m., and we arrived at the lodge just a bit before. We were seated a short time later. My daughter and I ordered salad, with a house ranch dressing that was too salty. But the John Dory my sister and I ordered, covered in a white wine sauce, served with beets, carrots and scalloped potatoes, was delicious. Meera, a vegetarian, had the only veggie dish on the menu. She really enjoyed it—even the pureed beets. Alan had a filet mignon that he pronounced superb.

We had timed our visit to the Eastern Sierra to coincide with the annual visit of the Perseid meteor showers to Earth's orbit. So, after dinner, we all climbed into Alan's Saab convertible and drove to a spot in the road where the lights were few.

Next morning, I was awakened at dawn by a very Los Angeles sound: choppers overhead. I walked out of our cabin and scanned the sky, though I could see nothing but a brilliant sunrise casting an alpen glow on the distant glacier and the Temple Crags. I walked up the trail, but all was quiet save for a few jays and the scolding of squirrels in the trees. I sat down near the stream and idly watched the rushing water, resolving to get in shape for a return trip—to the foot of the Palisade Glacier.

Rangachar is news and graphics editor for the Travel section.

Photos by ALAN GERSHENFELD

Glacier bound: Family hike on the North Fork of Big Pine Creek, above. Preparing to do a little fishing in the pond next to Glacier Lodge in Big Pine, left.

'Let's Go to the Glacier'

By Alexander Marko
Big Pine, Calif.

Not every glacier is so accessible as the Palisade Glacier, for it can be visited on a one-day trip. No special equipment is needed, only hiking shoes, a lunch, and a pair of legs ready and willing to be exercised!

The Palisade Glacier's location is unusual in several ways, besides being easily approached. It is the southernmost glacier in the Sierra Nevada, and, indeed, in the United States. Interestingly, it is on the precipitous eastern slope of the range, which faces the desert, instead of being nestled comfortably among some of the countless snowy peaks and ridges which extend westward for miles to the San Joaquin Valley. This accounts for its accessibility from Big Pine, an oasis on the high desert floor of Owens Valley.

Despite its nearness to the desert, the Palisade Glacier has not melted away because of its elevated position of more than 12,000 feet, where the air is always cool, and because it is sheltered from the warmth of the sun by two giant peaks exceeding 14,000 feet in height.

Although the glacier is not visible from Big Pine, it often comes to mind during the hot, dry days of mid-summer on the desert.

We usually leave town about 6:30 a.m. and drive up the twelve miles of Glacier Lodge road to its end at 8,500 feet. At this elevation the morning air is quite brisk and all are glad to start the eight-mile hike that will bring us to the glacier. Climbing the initial switchback in the trail warms everyone quickly. In fact, all enjoy stopping to "take five" and listen to the icy roar of Big Pine Creek as it pounds its way down in a white cataract.

Climbing above the area where the car is parked we find ourselves in a quieter part of the canyon. The roaring creek is frequently subdued in clear ponds bordered by beautiful meadows set in stands of pine and quaking aspen.

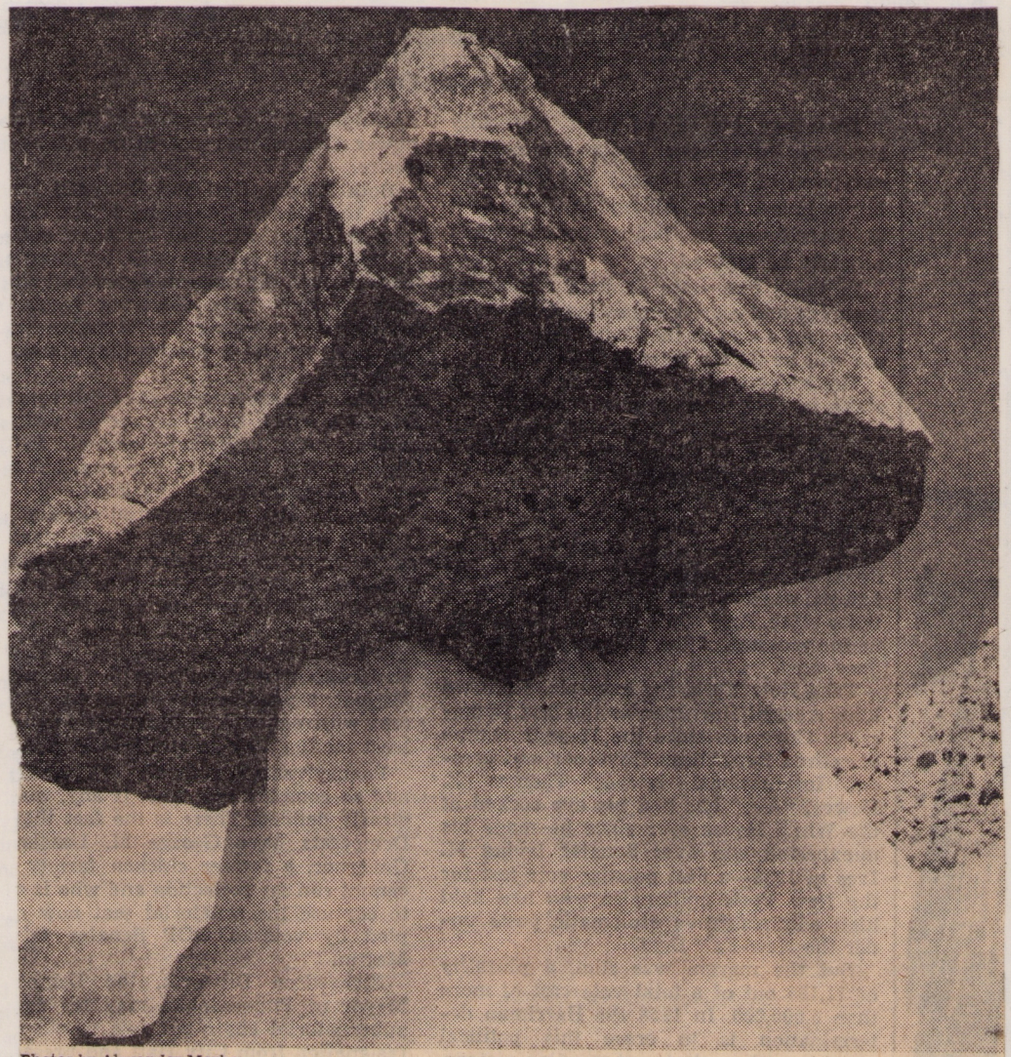
Suddenly through the pines we catch a glimpse of First Lake, a shining emerald of glacial water. Second and Third Lakes are passed in quick succession. Then we leave the canyon floor and begin the most arduous part of the hike, climbing up the rocky trail to the glacier.

The vegetation thins as the rocks become boulders. The trail fades out, becoming merely an endless number of piled up rocks for markers. Pauses become more frequent because rock climbing at this altitude seems especially tiring. Soon, however, the terminal moraine comes into view. This huge pile of broken rock to be laboriously climbed over would be very disheartening except for the realization that this is the last obstacle.

Finally, after much effort, we reach the top of the moraine, and look out across the great body of ice. Here the only sound is that of tiny streams of melting ice eroding the surface of the glacier into small turquoise canyons. Yet everywhere there is silent evidence of tremendous forces at work. Great boulders forced out of the high cirque by the action of moisture freezing, melting, and refreezing, are slowly carried by the glacier and deposited on the moraine. Some boulders are so large that they shade the ice supporting them, and as the surrounding ice melts, the boulder is left on a pinnacle.

After marveling at the imposing beauty of the glacier and the magnificent peaks rising more than 1,000 feet above the ice, we eat our lunch and then begin the hike down. How quickly we go! The sighs and complaining questions of the ascent, "How much farther do we have to go?", are forgotten. When the easily traveled trail is reached, the hike almost turns into a race to see who can return first to the car. At last all arrive and we drive home, getting there in time for a most welcome dinner and equally welcome beds!

Palisade Glacier, Southernmost Glacier in the United States



Photos by Alexander Marko

This tremendous rock rests on an ice pinnacle fully six feet high

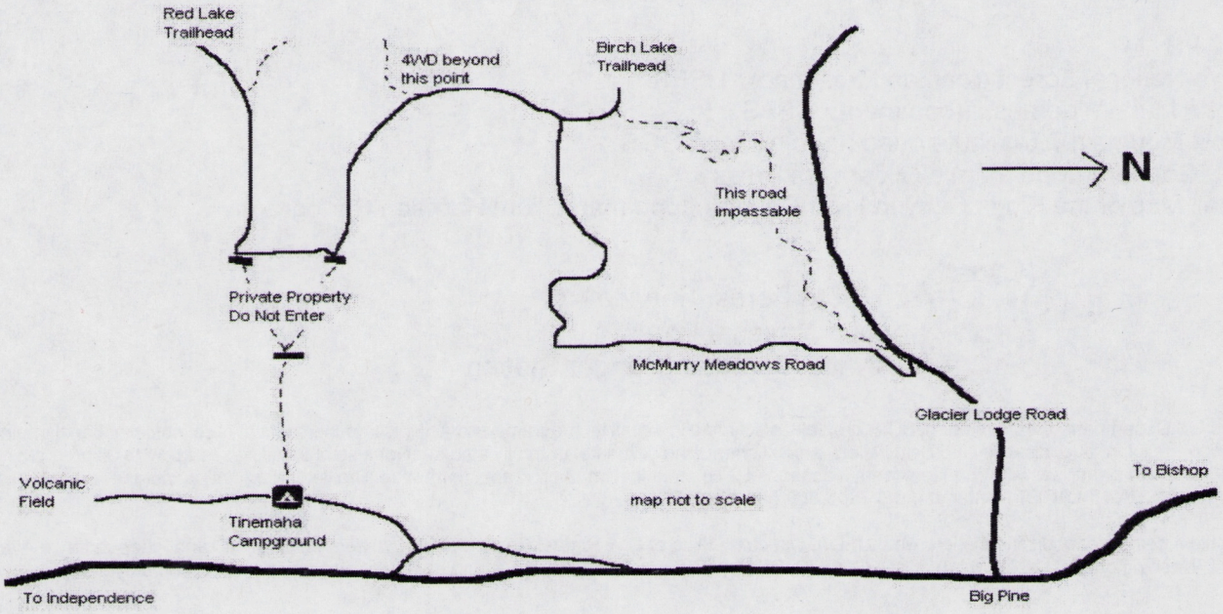
Birch Lake and Red Lake Trailheads
Inyo National Forest

To Access the Trailheads: Both of these trails are accessed via McMurry Meadows Road west of Big Pine. At the flashing yellow light in Big Pine, turn west onto Crocker Street (Glacier Lodge Road). After 2.5 miles, just after crossing Big Pine Creek, turn left onto McMurry Meadows Road and immediately turn left again. The road will soon turn to the south/southwest. **McMurry Meadows Road is 2WD-accessible for the first 7.3 miles; beyond this point a high-clearance 4WD vehicle is required. A high-clearance 4WD vehicle is also required to access the Birch Lake trailhead once leaving McMurry Meadows Road.**

Birch Lake Trailhead: From the Glacier Lodge Road/McMurry Meadows intersection, drive 5.9 miles and turn right. Drive another 0.6 miles and turn left at a second sign for Birch Lake. Past the fence (0.1 mile further) the road is impassable even for 4WD vehicles. It is recommended that vehicles park before the final junction as it can be difficult to turn around at the gate. Please leave the roadway clear. Hike along the road for 0.5 miles past the gate until the road forks. Do not take the left fork toward the stream. Follow the road to the right into a draw until it turns into a trail. The distance from here to Birch Lake is approximately 5 miles. Trailhead elevation is 6,600 feet; Birch Lake elevation is 10,800 feet.

Red Lake Trailhead: From the Glacier Lodge/McMurry Meadows intersection, drive 7.7 miles. You will come to a T-intersection; turn left (east) and drive approximately 1.5 miles. The road turns south for 0.6 mile. The road will turn again to the west/southwest for 2.3 miles to the trailhead. The drive takes 1 to 1.5 hours from Big Pine. Park the car and walk toward the birch trees. Approaching the trees, stop and look to the left. The trail goes straight up the slope to the west. After a few hundred yards the trail starts to switchback, entering Red Mountain Creek canyon. Stay high on the north side of the canyon. The distance to Red Lake is about 5 miles. Trailhead elevation is 6,500 feet; Red Lake elevation is 10,500 feet

Note: You cannot reach the Red Lake Trailhead from US Hwy 395 through Tinnemaha County Campground. Beyond the campground is private property and locked gates. The owner of the property asks that hikers not trespass on his land.



General Information: Birch Lake and Red Lake are in the John Muir Wilderness. A wilderness permit is required for overnight trips into the wilderness. For overnight stays outside of the wilderness, a California Campfire Permit is required. This applies to all open campfires, stoves and lanterns. Both of these permits can be obtained from the White Mountain Ranger Station in Bishop or at any of the Inyo National Forest Ranger Stations.

This section of the Inyo National Forest is a low-use area. The trails are not maintained and hikers should carry topographic maps and a compass. Recommended maps are listed below. These can be obtained at the White Mountain Ranger Station.

Please be aware of dangers on the trails. Rattlesnakes are common in the lower elevations. Rock falls and avalanches can occur in the higher elevations, along with extreme weather conditions at any time of the year. Be aware of potential flash floods and high-water stream crossings. As always, it is best to filter any water taken out of backcountry streams.

Landmark	Elevation	Distance
Birch Lake Trailhead	6,600 feet	----
Birch Lake	10,800 feet	5.0 miles
Birch Mountan	13,603 feet	CCR
The Thumb	13,356 feet	CCR
Red Lake Trailhead	6,500 feet	----
Red Lake	10,500 feet	5.0 miles
Split Mountain	14,058 feet	CCR

Note: CCR=Cross Country Route. Distance depends on the route taken.

For more information on climbing the peaks in this area, the following may be helpful:

GUIDEBOOKS

The High Sierra: Peaks, Passes and Trails by RJ Secor. The Mountaineers, 1992.
The Climber's Guide to the High Sierra by Steve Roper. Sierra Club Books, 1976.
California Fourteeners by Stephen Porcella & Cameron Burns. Chockstone Press, 1995.

MAPS

Inyo National Forest (road and trail map): USFS
John Muir Wilderness (topo map): USFS
Split Mountain 7.5-minute quad (topo map): USGS
Mt. Goddard (topo map): Wilderness Press
Trail Map of the Kings Canyon High Country (topo map): Tom Harrison Cartography

USDA Forest Service
Inyo National Forest
White Mountain Ranger Station

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2012

LET'S SPEND ANOTHER DAY IN BIG PINE

By Big Pine Entrepreneur Class

During your visit to the Owens Valley, spend a day in Big Pine where you can explore the Bristlecone Pines, and spend time with family, go fishing, camping, hiking, and many other types of fun family activities. We have the oldest tree in the world! Earth's oldest living inhabitant "Methuselah" at 4,767 years, has lived more than a millennium longer than any other tree. Stop at the kiosk by the big SEQUOIA pine tree at the north end of town for directions and details about the Bristlecone Pines.

A fun place for hiking is Glacier Lodge, where they have a great restaurant and phenomenal scenery. Silence is a virtue at Glacier Lodge; it's the first thing you'll hear after taking a deep breath of fresh mountain air, that fresh scent of healthy pine. You can feel the cool breeze through the pine trees and mountainous valley. Gaze down through the green valley; it goes on forever with its clear blue sky and magnificent scenery. With a thousand acres of wilderness to explore, Big Pine offers many different hiking spots that can be explored during the autumn and summer months. There are numerous hiking spots to explore as well as many camping sites. Camp sites run all along Big Pine and are great for summer vacations.

In the summer, you can always find many things to do: tubing the river, fishing, camping, and hiking. There is great terrain for motorcycles and quads, or go horseback

Palisade Glacier

riding on the trails. One of the most popular things that people like to do is tube the rivers, where you sit in a big inner tube and let the current take you down the river. In Big Pine, there are many different fishing spots to hang out at and enjoy the hot sun. At Klondike Lake, only three miles north of Big Pine on 395, you can swim, jet ski and have a nice summer day.

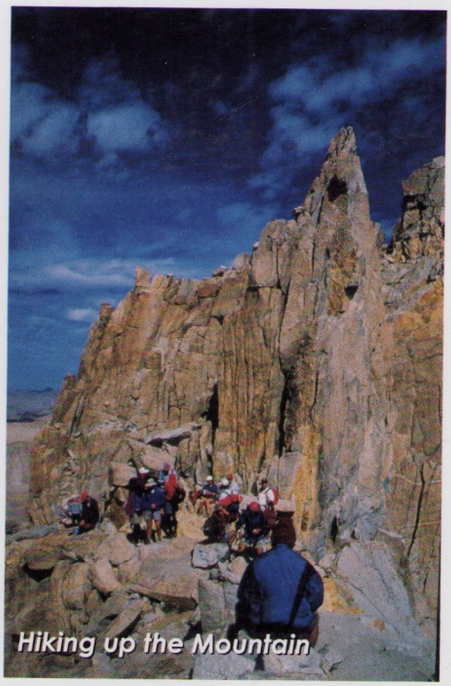
Located 50 miles from Big Pine are the highest sand dunes in the country, Eureka Dunes, and there you can find many camping and hiking spots.

Another great place to spend the day would be at the Caltech,"BIGEARS". The New Jersey Institute of Technology is planning to expand operations at the California Institute of Technology Radio Observatory north of Big Pine by adding a new set of radio telescopes. Owens Valley Radio Observatory is located on Leighton Lane in Big Pine and gives tours.

Another interesting place that is exciting to see are the Lava Tubes, which are located southwest of Big Pine. Turn west on Crocker Street and drive up to Glacier Road and then take a left after Bernasconi at the second left after the cattle guard. They are a hundred and eighty million years old. It's interesting to be able to see the inside of a volcano where once lava had been. Surrounding the volcano are lava rocks that spread throughout the valley.

The town of Big Pine is always refreshingly uplifting with its small town charm, quaint atmosphere, and the local residents are always happy and welcoming. Stop and spend another day in Big Pine while you explore the Owens Valley!

Packing up the Mountain


Hiking up the Mountain

SPOTLIGHT

Explore Big Pine's backyard

2012

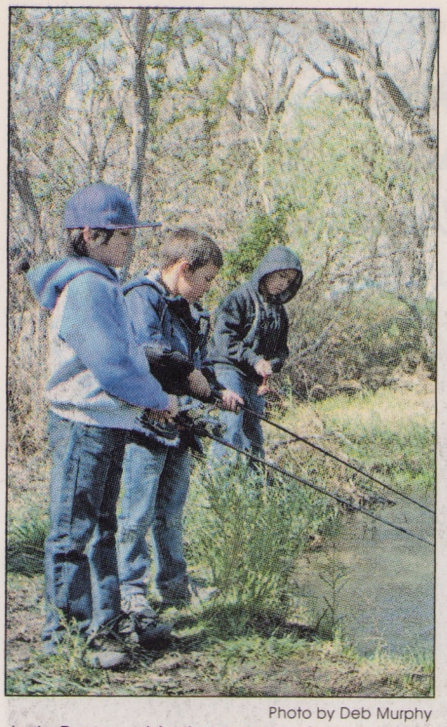


Photo by Deb Murphy

Justin, Preston and Austin were among the many anglers who hit Taboose Creek during the 2011 Opener. Their first fishing trip, the three boys came up from Rancho Cucamonga with a party of family and friends that has made the season opener a 70-year tradition.

By Mike Bodine

Big Pine might be just another sleepy town on U.S. 395 to some, but the community has a big heart and plenty of fun right outside the door.

The Center Fire in March 2011, shoved along by brute-force winds, cut through the town like a laser beam, destroying nearly 20 homes. But, the town bounced back and is ready to welcome anglers for another season of fishing – from glacier fed turquoise hued lakes hidden in the backcountry to tule-choked creeks and streams in the foothills.

On the way up the Owens Valley there is a campground on nearly every road off U.S. 395 such as Goodale and Taboose (see the campground Guide in this publication). It is suggested to call ahead to check the status of campgrounds as many of these campgrounds were undergoing renovation this spring and may not yet be ready to accept guests.

The campgrounds are usually alongside the creek of the campground's namesake. These waters are regularly stocked by the Department of Fish and Game but the thick brush turns away plenty.

Both Bruce Ivey, 60-year resident, and veteran angler and Bishop native Jarrett Coons, owner of Sierra mountain Trout Guide Service, said these seldom visited and sometimes barely seen waters com-

See ***Big Pine***, page 90

Photo by Jarrett Coons/Sierra Mountain Trout Guide Service

A beautiful immature wild rainbow, caught at First Lake along the north fork of Big Pine Creek. "Look at those par marks. If you look closely you can see the scud imitation in his mouth. They were nuts for this fly!" said Guide Jarrett Coons.

Big Pine

Continued from page 88

ing down the Sierra from Independence to Big Pine offer some of the best fishing in the valley.

Coons said he's been out and tossed a fly in a tiny two-inch stretch of creek not covered with wild rose bush, sticks, leaves and debris, and had fish "come out of nowhere" for a bite.

Coons also suggested **Little Fish Springs** near the Fish Springs Hatchery as a great spot to catch beautiful fish. Coons said the water, the same water

that has proven successful in fish husbandry at Fish Springs and other nearby hatcheries for nearly a century, creates striking hues in the fish, beautiful markings, stripes and spots.

On the east side of the highway is **Tinnemaha Reservoir**. Just park at the fence and walk in – again the tules and brush are the deterrents here. Coons said he has heard stories of great small-mouth bass being taken from near the outlet using Rapalas.

In Big Pine, a left turn at Hi-Country Market on Baker Street will take you west toward the Sierra Nevada.

The trailhead starts at what used to be Glacier Lodge, featuring cabins, a fish-laden pond, general store and campground. The creek along the way to the trailhead is chock full of fish as well. **Big Pine Creek** forks; the **south fork** comes down from the Middle Palisade Glacier with several small lakes along the trail.

The **north fork** leads to the Palisade Glacier – the biggest in the Sierra – and arguably the most alpine areas in the mountains. Along the north fork trail is the cabin of actor Lon Chaney, the "Man of a Thousand Faces" who played the "Wolfman" and "Phantom of the Opera." Past the cabin, it's on to **Lakes 1-7**.

Coons said he spent much of the summer of 2011 in the backcountry and enjoyed the fishing at **Lake 1** immensely. "It was unbelievable."

He said he used scuds and caught a quick 15-20 his first visit to the inlet. And, it was a smorgasbord of rainbows, brown and brookies – and some monster ones at that.

The **Owens River** can be accessed by turning east on S.R. 168 toward the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, home to some of the oldest living things on the planet.

Coons can be reached at (760) 263-5013 or via e-mail at jcz.coons@gmail.com.

Photo by Jason Sharpe

This bass weighed in at more than 5 lbs. after being taken from a secret honey hole along the Owens River near Big Pine this past October.

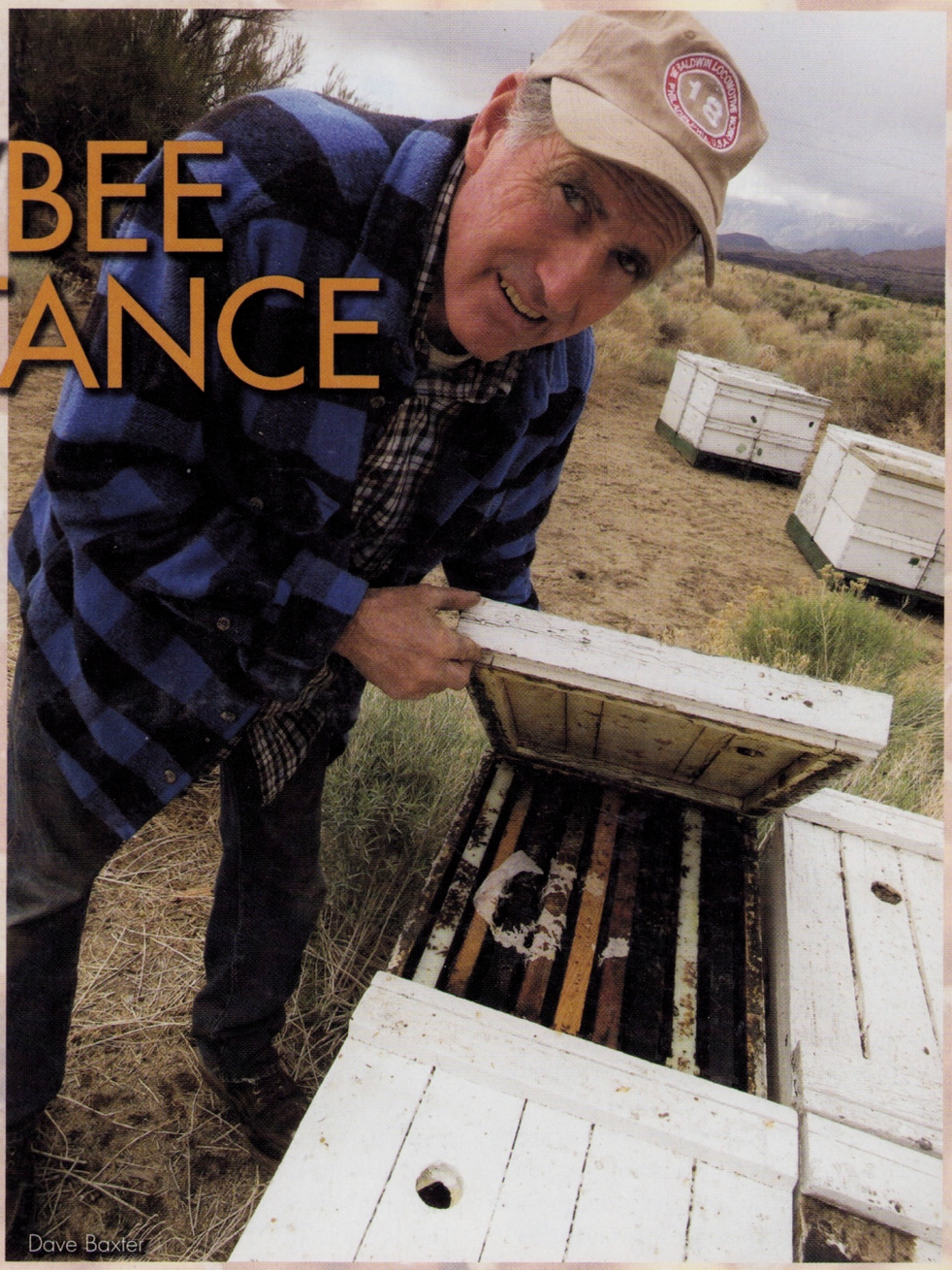
Photo by Jarrett Coons/Sierra Mountain Trout Guide Service

First Lake is one of seven numbered lakes along the north fork of Big Pine Creek. "Look at that color: very good potential for big fish. I've seen them in there," said Guide Jarrett Coons.

HONEYBEE INHERITANCE

The long beekeeping tradition of the Baxter family

Story and photos by **Lyra Pierotti**


Dave Baxter

Dave Baxter has been working all day on a 1964 Chevrolet three-quarter ton flatbed truck. To passersby it looks like the scrapped remains of an old beater, but to Baxter, it's more than that.

The old heap is something of a luxury vehicle for his bees, which produce some of the Eastern Sierra's tastiest honey, in spite of fickle weather, imposing altitudes and marauding bears.

Baxter plans to have it running again soon to haul his bees around.

"I just can't see buying a thirty to forty thousand dollar truck to go scratch it up in these canyons."

Plus, he likes the work, both on the truck and among his hives.

Dave is the latest of several generations of Baxter beekeepers. His family originally came from Maine. They were trappers; his grandfather generally was a handy fellow. He started off hauling ore from the mines, and eventually bought a ranch in Independence. There, he started grazing cattle along the river, grew fruit and kept bees.

He peddled the honey and fruit to the miners in the area. "Kind of like what I do today," Baxter said.

As the namesake of Baxter pass, it was his lineage that forged the trails up Baxter and Shepherd Passes with their cattle, grazing them in the mountains to prevent alkali disease by clearing their systems of selenium accumulated from the valley floor forage.

In the infamous early 1900s, the family sold the ranch to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Dave says he wishes they wouldn't have sold it. His grandfather's original adobe house is still there, on that land.

Today, Baxter lives on one-hundred sixty acres between Big Pine and Independence. Water from Birch Creek flows through his property; he's even considered bottling the crisp spring water that bubbles up above his house. He has cows, grows alfalfa, and has a garden where he picks and bottles the latest in his line of Baxter Ranch goods, such as honey chileno peppers (Great in scrambled eggs.)

But his main gig is still the honeybees.

Baxter said he likes keeping bees because he gets to be his own boss. "I like running around selling the honey—running around the mountains taking care of the bees."

He keeps his bees between Lone Pine and Bishop, from April through October. In the winter, he packs up the hives and sends them to the west side to pollinate the orange trees, and give them time to build up their hive so they are nice and strong when they come back home.

If they make it back in time for the

locust trees, Baxter said, that's some of the best honey. But most of the time it's too cold over here for them when the locusts are blooming. So the bees will come back to buckwheat, and find clover and ragweed along the river, and eventually make their way as high as seven thousand feet in the mountains for the various wildflowers.

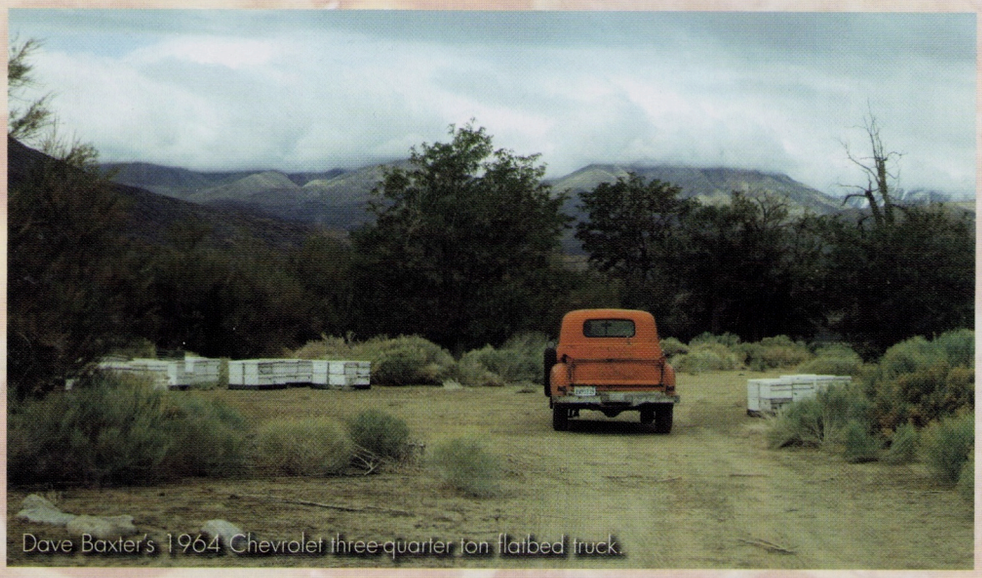
But this is where life in a beehive becomes treacherous.

It's not just cartoon bears that have a penchant for honey. Pine Creek has been a particularly problematic area for Dave. The bears will find his hives, knock one over, and come back a day or so later for the honey, after the bees have vacated the toppled hive.

If it is too hot or too cold for the bees, and Baxter isn't there soon enough to rescue them, they can die off pretty quickly. He loses, on average, thirty to forty hives, each one costing him up to two hundred dollars to replace, not to mention the associated loss in production. In the worst bear year, he lost two hundred hives.

Baxter said the bear problems started in the 1970s, when particularly mischievous bears from other areas were relocated to the Eastside. With too many bears and less food in the Eastern Sierra, wildlife and human life started to clash. He now keeps electric bear fences around the hives, but some of the bears have still figured out how to get in.

Are they smarter than the average bear? Not really. "Either we balance it or Mother Nature will," Baxter said. "The bears will die if they overpopulate."


Dave Baxter's 1964 Chevrolet three-quarter ton flatbed truck.

The hive and honey

Baxter starts the bees on a simple wooden frame with wax that slots into a box. The bees build on this structure, creating cells to hold their honey, pollen, and brood. The honey and pollen is their food. The pollen, obviously, is from the flowers. The honey, Dave explained, is basically regurgitated nectar that has been dried out in the bee's body.

Because of the Eastern Sierra's dry climate, honey made here is about as dry as it gets. His is thirteen percent water, Baxter said. Highly desirable. At twenty percent water, honey will ferment.

Baxter's honey is raw, which means he only heats it to one-hundred twenty degrees Fahrenheit so he can pour it through a screen to filter out pieces of sticks and pieces of bees. He does not pasteurize the honey, which ruins it.

Honey has some tremendous health benefits. Since there is a little pollen mixed in, it is known to help with local allergies – pure pollen is even more potent. Honey is also a natural antimicrobial, and can be used on wounds and burns.

There's more money in beekeeping these days, Baxter said, with all the almonds cropping up on the west side. "I think that's probably what's causing this loss of bees; they're just trying to produce so many.

"There are more bees than there ever were in the United States. But we're losing more, percentage-wise. And people are paying attention more. They've figured out that pollination is really valuable."

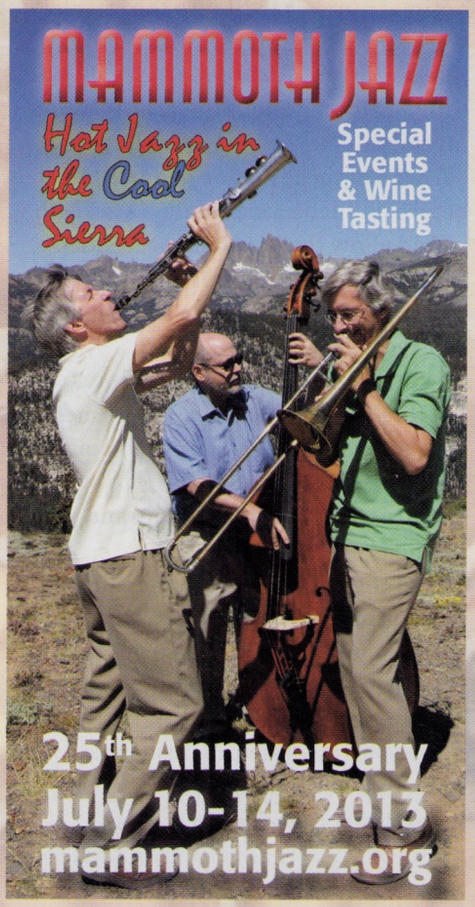
To keep up with demand, queens are often imported from all over the world, and with them come various mites, which can easily wipe out a colony.

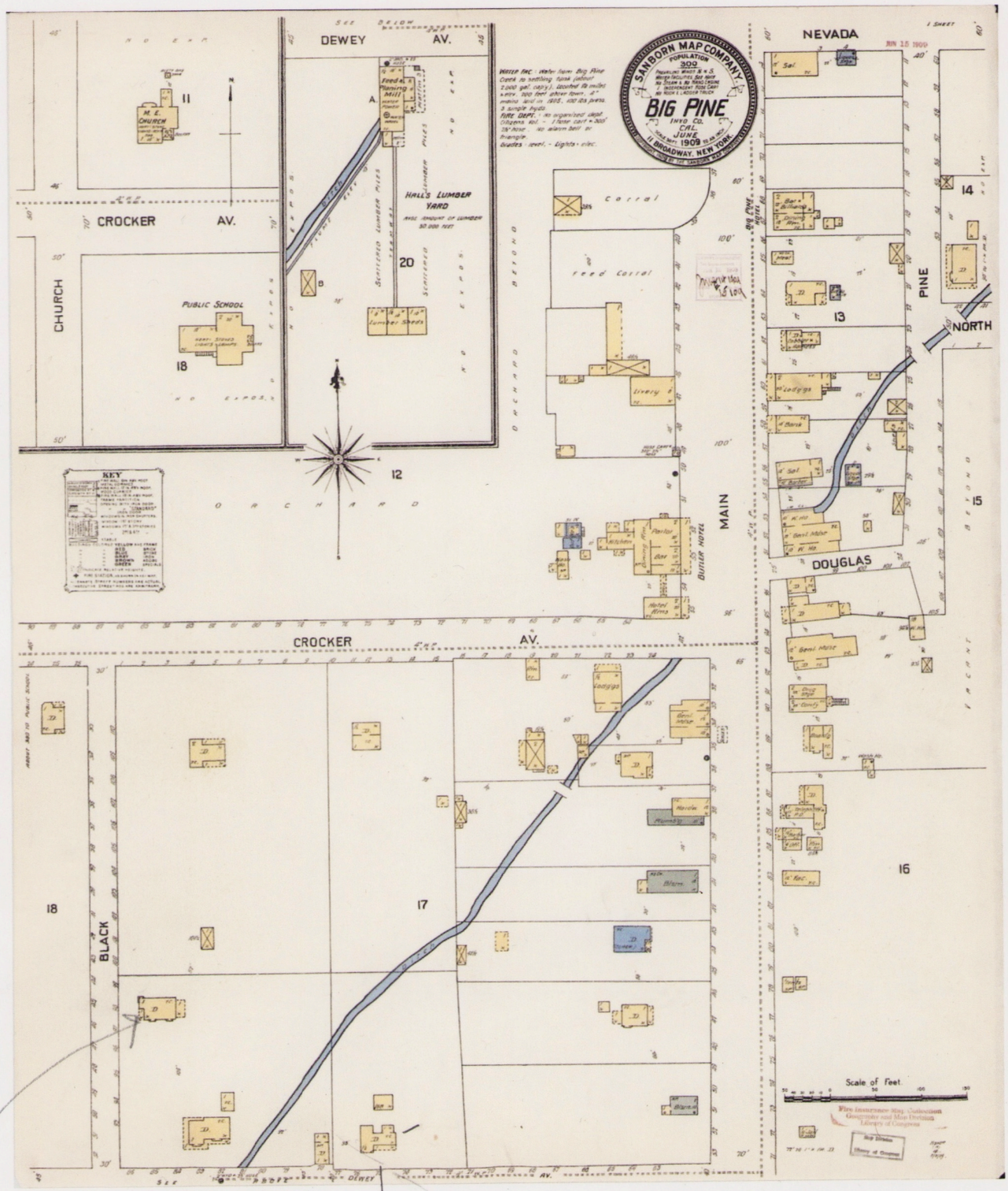
Baxter gets some of his queens from northern California. He also grafts his own by removing the queen from a strong hive and replacing her spot with one of her recently laid eggs, or sometimes he'll just let the hive make a new queen naturally.

The Baxter family beekeeping tradition is a reminder of how much and how little the world changes. With borders obliterated by international trade and communication, the modern bee is exposed to much more disease and discomfort.

But after all these years, in our massive, modern, global economy, Baxter has still found a way to peddle his goods, locally.

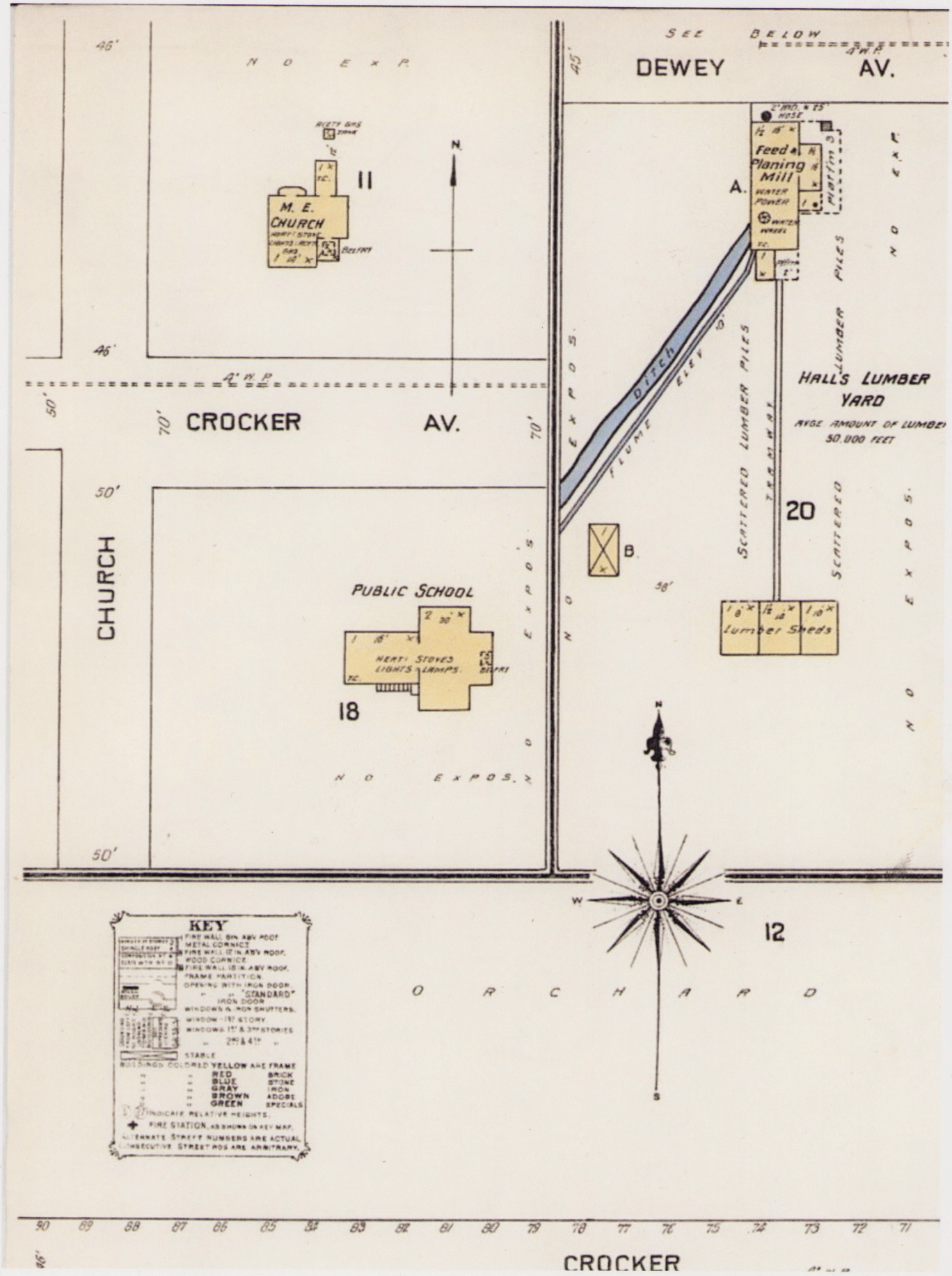
Today, instead of miners, his market is the new local, mountainfolk, urban visitors, foodies, and the descendents of a long line of settlers who have carved out their own little piece of Owens Valley history.

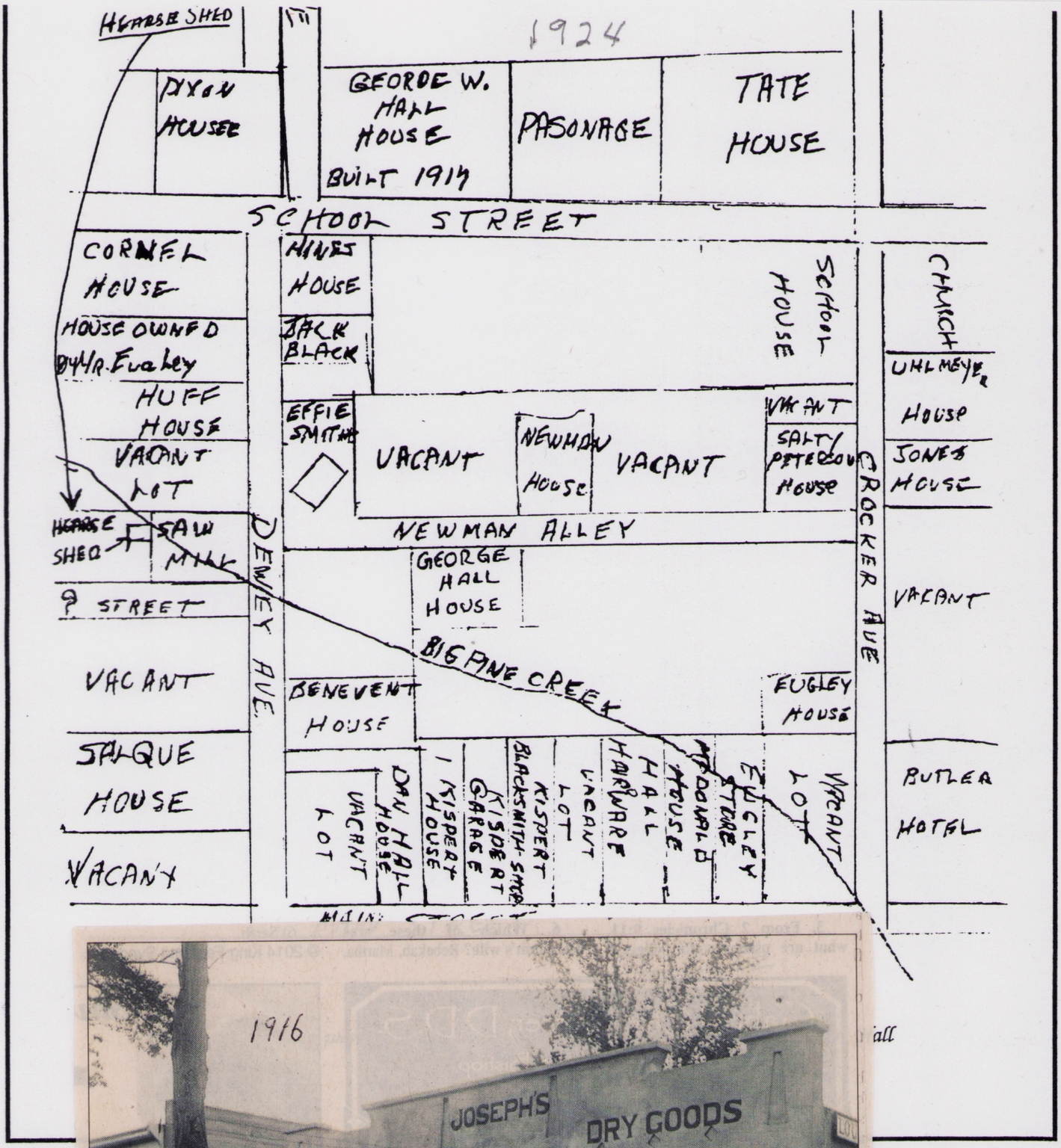




MEREDITH'S HOUSE

GENE'S HOUSE


SEE BELOW
DEWEY AV.
N O E X P.
M. E. CHURCH
11
N.
Feed & Planing Mill
A.
WATER POWER
Platform
N O E X P.
N O E X P O S.
Ditch
FLUME
ELEV. 'D'
SCATTERED LUMBER PILES
TRAMWAY
HALL'S LUMBER YARD
AVGE. AMOUNT OF LUMBER 50,000 FEET
CROCKER AV.
CHURCH
20
B.
PUBLIC SCHOOL
HEAT: STOVES LIGHTS: LAMPS.
18
N O E X P O S.
Lumber Sheds
12
O R C H A R D
KEY
STABLE
INDICATE RELATIVE HEIGHTS.
FIRE STATION, AS SHOWN ON KEY MAP.
ALTERNATE STREET NUMBERS ARE ACTUAL.
CONSECUTIVE STREET NOS. ARE ARBITRARY.
CROCKER



Minnie and Louis Joseph standing in front of the second Big Pine Joseph's (located where Rossi's was

REPORT XVII

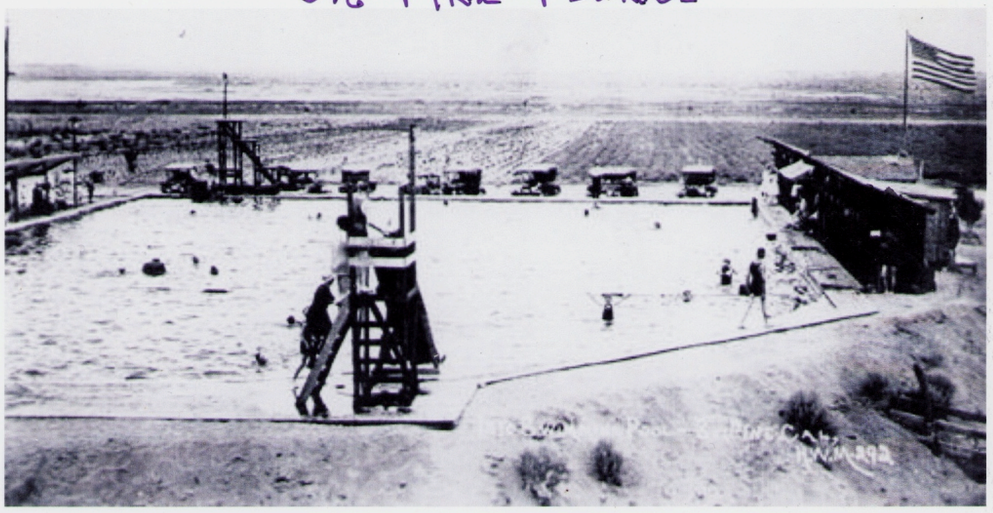
OF THE

STATE MINERALOGIST

MINING IN CALIFORNIA DURING 1920

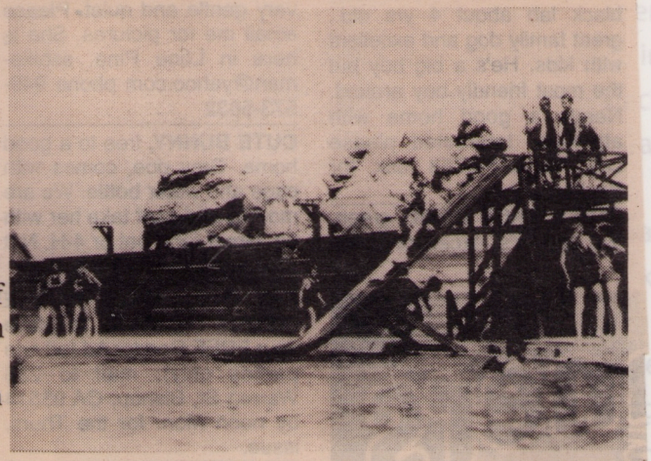
Nancy Hanks. (Lead-silver.) Located in the Waucoba district, 28 miles by road southeast of Big Pine, on east flank of Inyo Mountains. Elevation 8250 feet. Idle. Owned by George B. Warren of Big Pine, California.

BIG PINE "PLUNGE"

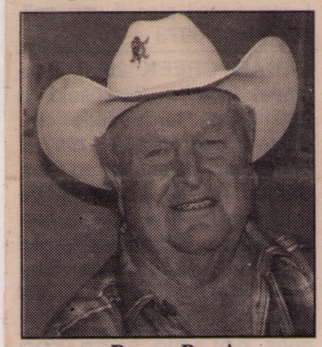


Warren's Swimming Hole

2010



Mrs. Steward asked me the other day where they got the water for the swimmin' hole.The pool was closed before I was born, but I heard a lot of stories about it. The water was taken from the spring just to the south of the pool on the hill. It ran into a large black pipe and wound it's was down the hill. The sun heated the water. Some of the old pipe is still in the draw just above the pool. I don't know exactly when the pool closed down or when it was started, I know it was running right around 1923, this is when the picture was taken. It was open quite a few years before that. My Aunt Stella said she swam there as a young girl, she was born in the 1900's. You could get a ride from Big Pine to the pool for 1 cent, but she said they always walked as they didn't want to spend that kind of money. The road that goes by it was the original 395. The locust grove on the north side of the road was planted by Gene Mallory, it was planted as a roadside park. The 395 from Big pine to Bishop that exists today was finished in 1936, I know this because I was talking one day and said I could remember them working on the road, my mother overheard me and said I could not remember as when my father drove my mother to Bishop to have me on the old road, 10 days later when he brought her home, they drove on the new road. What I remember seeing was where the road crossed Reasse lake, the road would sink every once in a while and they would have to redo it. I remember seeing the trucks and the graders working at Reasse lake from time to time.



Duane Rossi

1912 George B. Warren
Inventor and Manufacturer

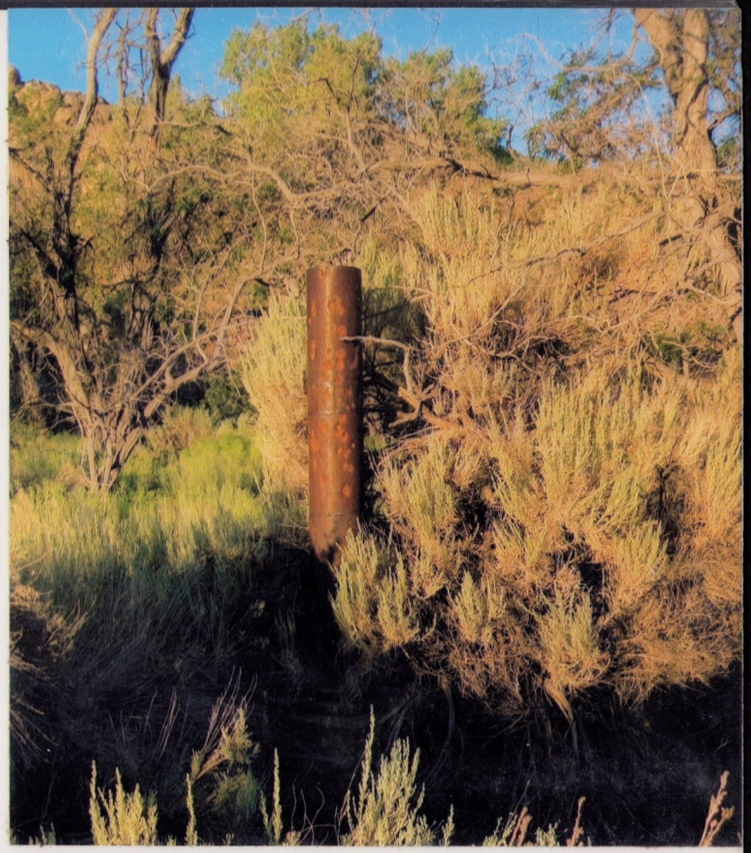
While a resident in Illinois, Mr. Warren invented a line of sanitary stable fixtures which were put on the market from their factory in Rockford, in that state, and have attained an international sale. Retiring from active business, Mr. Warren turned his attention to land near Big Pine, owned by him for ten years but almost wholly undeveloped during that period, prior to his becoming a resident of Inyo County.

He is probably the pioneer in developing water for irrigation in this county by pumping. On his place he has a well 230 feet deep from which a flow of sixty miner's inches is obtained by the use of a fifteen-horsepower Samson engine and Wood's propeller pump. This flow will irrigate 160 acres of land, to be developed for the apple industry.

Among the several wells he has put down on the property is one yielding a fine mineral water, charged with iron and magnesia to a degree making it equal to many of the celebrated mineral waters of the world.

Also Warren Lake
& Warren Bench

Hot Water Source →



Warren's Hot Plunge

Highway 395 →

Pipes To Pool ↙

County Road →

An ariel view of Big Pine Saturday shows the path of the Center Fire and damage to various homes throughout the community. Photo courtesy Kiana Wyatt

Solemn residents and firefighters gather next to what was once a home, now reduced to smoldering ash and a lone chimney. The county has declared a State of Emergency and if approved, money and resources will follow to help the victims and the community. Photo by Mike Bodine

Fire destroys 19 homes in Big Pine

Residents evacuated as high winds whipped blaze through canyon and into town

By Mike Gervais
Register Staff

While many residents were able to return to their homes in Big Pine Saturday morning, the homecoming was bittersweet as some found they had no homes to return to, their residences and worldly possessions destroyed during the night by the 800-acre Center Fire.

A total of 19 homes were destroyed in the fire, which broke out at about 3:30 p.m. Friday near the Bernasconi Center west of town. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Preliminary estimates put the cost of damages from the fire at $4.5 million.

A number of fundraisers and relief efforts have been established to assist those rendered homeless by the blaze or otherwise impacted by the fire (see accompanying story on pg. 1).

Due to high winds, the fire spread rapidly, driven northeast into Big Pine. Local law enforcement officers from the Inyo County Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol began the first of a series of mandatory evacuations at about 5 p.m.

Sheriff Bill Lutze said that the execution of evacuation orders went smoothly, considering the speed of the blaze and danger to homes.

"I thought all and all the evacuations went well, everyone was cooperative and Health and Human Services did a great job of opening evacuation centers," Lutze said.

Displaced residents were sent to the Big Pine High School Auditorium, Eastern Sierra Tri-County Fairgrounds in Bishop or Lone Pine High School.

Smoke, seen from State Route 168, engulfs the town of Big Pine Friday evening as the Center Fire, driven by heavy wind, makes its way into the community, destroying 19 homes. Photo by Mike Gervais

The mandatory evacuation order was lifted at about midnight Friday, allowing most residents to return to their homes.

During the evacuation and throughout much of the night, U.S. 395 was closed to traffic from Bishop to Independence. Many residents who were evacuated were required to travel to Independence for shelter as the fire threatened to jump the highway.

At the fire's peek, more than 250 firefighters from across the state, including volunteer firefighters from local communities from Lone Pine to Mammoth.

The blaze spread quickly, moving from Bernasconi northeast, hitting first the westernmost areas of town including the Glacier View Mobile Home Park and the area near Rossi Road.

Big Pine resident Jarrett Coons, who lives in the Glacier View Mobile Home Park, said he was fishing on the canal around 4 p.m. when he noticed the fire and began to see ash blowing into town. When he returned home he received the mandatory evacuation order from local sheriff's deputies.

"Everybody got out – the sheriff's did a great job considering how fast everything happened," he said, "but we didn't have time to really get anything out of the house."

Coons said volunteer firefighters remained at the park to protect homes, despite the fire's progression, and managed to save about half of the dwellings there.

Coons was able to return to Big Pine at about 7 a.m. Saturday, and was relieved to see that his was one of the homes in the park that was spared.

"We were relieved that our house is still here, the guys did an awesome job saving what they could, but we have a lot of friends in the park who lost everything. There were parts of homes that were just vaporized," Coons said.

In addition to the number of trailers burned at Glacier

See FIRE, page 3

Numerous relief efforts already under way to help those who lost everything

By Mike Bodine
Register Staff

Just days after the Center Fire in Big Pine destroyed 19 homes, the community and local service agencies are stepping up to provide aid to those displaced. Preliminary estimates put the damage caused by the blaze at more than $4.5 million.

There are also reports of the amazing community tenor of the tiny town.

"It's worth emphasizing the supportive community spirit," said Mary Chasin, Red Cross supervisor of Health Services for the Los Angeles region. "It's never easy after a disaster but this community is very resilient."

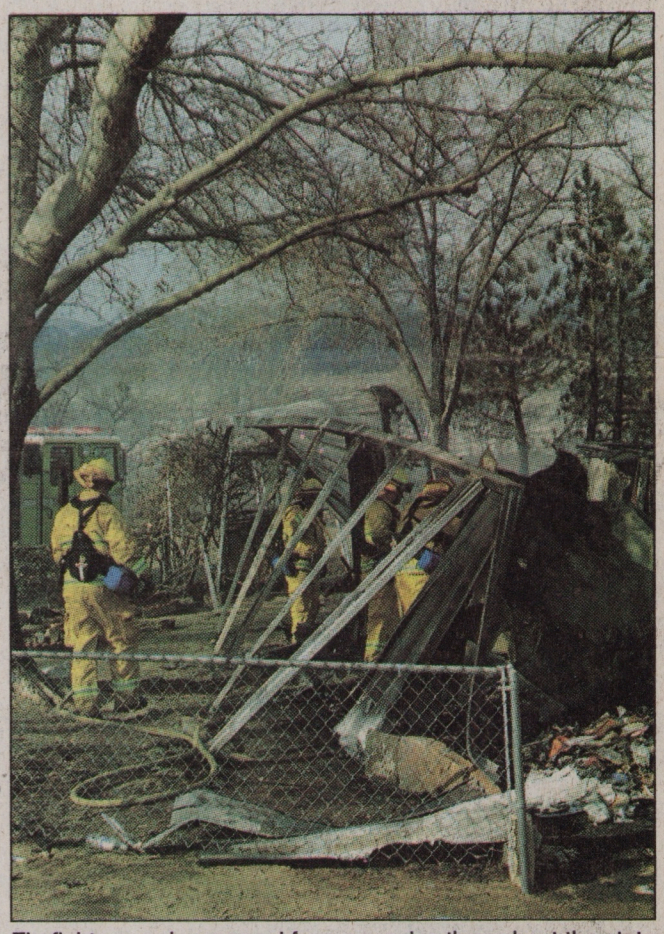
Donation jars and buckets are already popping up in Big Pine and Bishop, and fundraising events are scheduled for this weekend and beyond.

Inyo County Health and Human Services is helping displaced residents connect to friends and family, and vise versa, said Assistant Director Linda Benson.

She said this has not been an easy task thus far as HHS can only verify the safety of people who had signed in at one of the many local evacuation shelters. The Big Pine shelter at the high school was closed on Sunday after helping 103 evacuees Friday and Saturday. The Lone Pine high school shelter was closed early on Saturday, while the Bishop shelter at the Tri-County Fairgrounds helped more than 30 folks on Friday night and then closed on Saturday.

Benson added that most of the relief efforts are being carried out under the auspices of the Red Cross.

Chasin said that the Red Cross generally serves as short-term assistance. "It's usually enough time for folks to find other arrangements – such as staying with friends and family."



Firefighters and personnel from agencies throughout the state assisted in the Center Fire. The fire destroyed nearly 20 homes and did approximately $4.5 million in damage. Photo by Mike Bodine

Just hours before press time Monday, the Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action had announced it would be the hub for fire relief donations. Jane McDonald said Monday the agency is accepting any sort of donation: money, food or clothing.

Inyo County Fourth District Supervisor Marty Fortney, whose district includes Big Pine, said County Administrator Kevin Carunchio had declared a State of Emergency on Friday and the document will be ratified today by the Board of Supervisors. The declaration, if approved by the state, will open additional funding avenues for emergency relief.

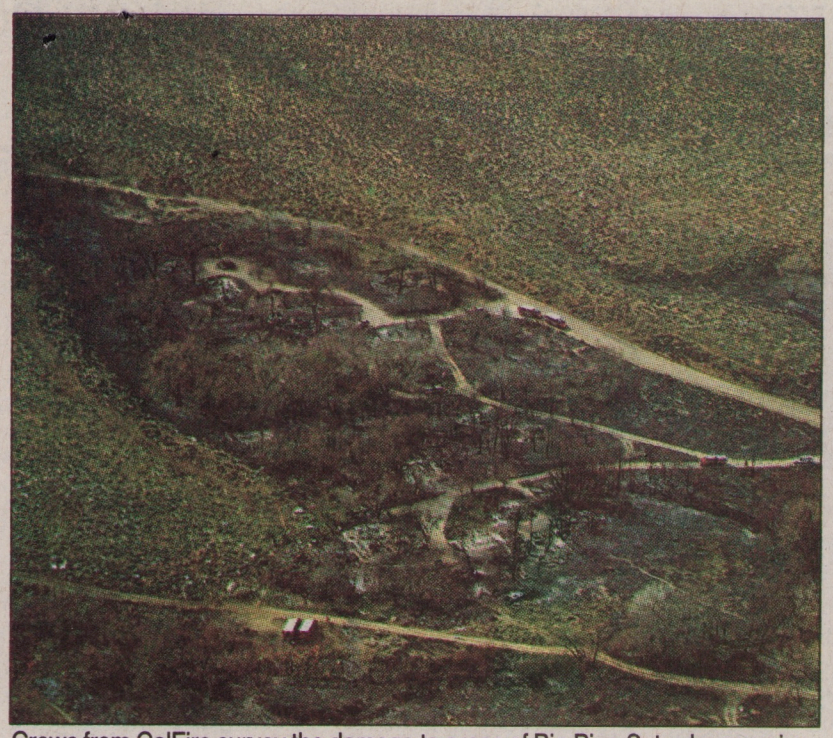
Closer to ground zero, the Big Pine Methodist Church will be open from dawn to dusk all this week. The church will have tables of clothes available free to those in need, and will be open so folks can donate clean, gently used clothes of all sizes and types – shoes, jackets, pants, sweaters. Food is also available and the church welcomes all donations, perishable and non-perishable.

The Rev. Karen Moore said the church is also asking people to donate gift cards redeemable at local retailers and markets.

On Saturday the church will sponsor a garage sale, where fire victims can pick up household items they need and have been lost in the fire, and residents can donate items as well.

Local establishments such Jeff's Country Kitchen in Big Pine and Wye Road Feed and Supply, Sierra Saddlery, the Bishop Chamber of Commerce and Big Pine School, to name a few, have set out donation

See RELIEF, page 3



Crews from CalFire survey the damage to areas of Big Pine Saturday morning, keeping an eye out for lingering hot spots. Photo courtesy Kiana Wyatt

The devastating scene at the Glacier View Mobile Home Park on Saturday, west of Big Pine, and east of the origin of the Center Fire, near the Bernasconi Center. Photo by Mike Bodine

FIRE

Continued from front page

View, portions of the 100-plus-year-old Rossi homestead sustained major and/or complete damage, however the extent could not be confirmed. At least one home was completely lost.

From the trailer park, spot fires hit east of Baker Creek Campground, burning livestock fields near County Road and School Street and prompting the evacuation of dozens of horses from the Big Pine Saddle Club and approximately 15 cats and dogs from the Inyo County Animal Shelter on County Road.

Inyo County Animal Shelter Manager Julie Sutton said county animal control staff evacuated the shelter at about 4:30 p.m. Friday, taking the animals to Bishop Veterinary Hospital.

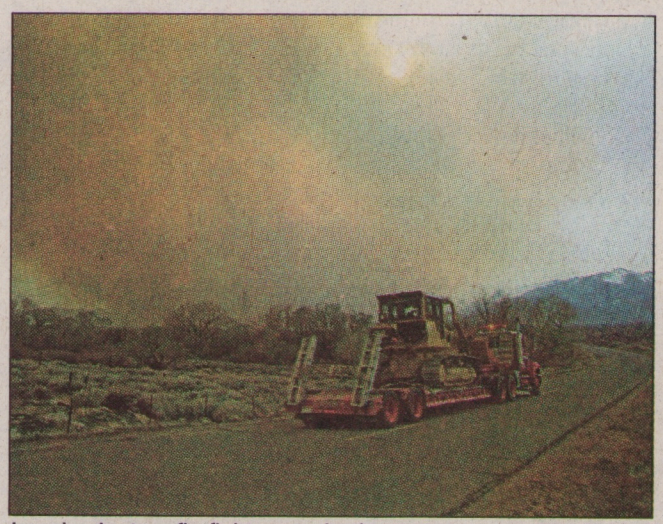
No animals were inured during the fire, and the shelter was not damaged.

The animals were returned Sunday afternoon.

At the Big Pine Saddle Club, residents scrambled to load up their horses and transport them to the Tri-County Fairgrounds in Bishop, where free stables were provided and Dr. Ken and Nancy Gilliland and Peter Stickles of Zack Ranch provided hay to the refugee equines.

Also, Lee Roeser of Independence made his way to Big Pine early Friday evening with a large stock trailer to help get horses from the fields near School Street to safety as the blaze made its way there.

CalFire Public Information Officer Julie Hutchinsen said firefighters were able to get a handle on the fire by 9 p.m. Friday evening because the high winds began to die down. Later in the evening, firefighters got another break in the form of light precipitation that helped quell the blaze.



Local volunteer firefighters rushed to get as many people and resources as they could on the Center Fire Friday before the blaze hit the community of Big Pine. Above, a truck driver hauls a bull dozer to the west side of town Friday evening. Photo by Mike Gervais

Saturday saw more relief for local volunteers, many of whom had been on the fire all night.

"Everyone worked so well together, the local fire agencies really deserve some recognition. The first responders had to wait four hours for back-up from down south, and they just did a phenomenal job," Hutchinsen said.

The fire was almost fully contained Saturday evening, and any hot spots that may have persisted throughout the weekend were completely exitinguished Sunday, when Big Pine experienced heavy rain.

Over the course of the weekend many rumors about the blaze circulated through communities of the Eastern Sierra, claiming that Bernasconi, Palisade Glacier High School, the Big Pine Animal Shelter, Big Pine Saddle Club and the Roosevelt Tree at the intersection of U.S. 395 and State Route 168 had been destroyed. Despite close calls at each of those locations, none were claimed by the fire.

Other rumors have persisted claiming that several local youth were arrested in connection to the blaze. Sheriff Lutze said that no arrests have been made, adding that CalFire investigators continue to look into the source of the blaze.

No deaths have been reported in relation to the fire, but Hutchinsen said one Inyo County sheriff's deputy was injured by flying debris Friday night. That injury, she added, was caused by wind, not fire.

Sheriff Lutze said the officer suffered injuries to his chest after a sign struck him as he helped with the evacuation effort. He was treated for his injuries and will be off work for the next few days, but is expected to make a full recovery.

County leaders will hold a special meeting today at 3 p.m. at the One Stop Center on Main Street in Bishop to ratify a Declaration of a State of Emergency due to the fire and hear a request from Inyo County Integrated Waste to waive all gate and disposal fees associated with debris from the fire.

RELIEF

Continued from front page

collection buckets for the victims. More fundraisers and donations are being established and will be reported on when more information becomes available.

To find people:

• Benson said people displaced by the fire are encouraged to call friends and loved ones and let them know the situation

• For those looking for people in Big Pine possibly displaced by the fire or who have not signed up at a shelter may call (760) 937-7686

To donate:

• Checks can be made out to IMACA, specifying "Big Pine Fire" on the memo line, and mailed to P.O. Box 845. Bishop. CA 93515, or checks and other donations can be brought into the office at 224 S. Main St. For more information, call (760) 873-8557 or (800) 641-1822

• Eastern Sierra Community Bank has a fund set up and donations can be made in person or to any of the three branches in the area, or mailed to Eastern Sierra Community Bank, 351 N. Main St., Bishop, CA 93514. Check should be made out to the "Big Pine Fire Relief Fund." For more information, call Alyx Bien at (760) 937-0048

• Clothes, household items and food can be donated, or obtained by victims, at the Big Pine Methodist Church from sunrise to sunset all this week located at the corner of School and Crocker streets

• A Community Dinner will be held from 4-7 p.m. on Friday, March 25 at Big Pine Methodist Church. There is no charge for the dinner but donations and gift cards for the fire victims are encouraged

• A spaghetti and meatballs dinner for the fire victims will be held from 5:30-10 p.m. on Saturday, April 16 at the Bishop Elks Lodge

• Donation buckets are set up at Jeff's Country Kitchen, Wye Road Feed and Supply, Sierra Saddlery, the Bishop Area Chamber of Commerce and the Big Pine School

A picture (l) of the John Fire taken at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, from a distance, shows the magnitude and scope of the fire that started Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. approximately two miles south of Big Pine. The fire first traveled west before winds turned the flames north. As of Wednesday afternoon it had consumed 2,000 acres and was 15 percent contained. More than 500 personnel have been called to battle the blaze. Photo at left by Mark Hodges; photo at right by Deb Murphy

Fire scorches 2,000 acres south of Big Pine

9-15-2011

Cause under investigation as crews work to contain blaze

By Mike Bodine
Register Staff

A fire south of Big Pine had burned 2,000 acres as of Wednesday morning and was reportedly 15 percent contained. While there have been no reports of any lightning in the area at the time the blaze broke out Tuesday afternoon, the cause of the fire is under investigation.

More than 500 personnel have been assigned to the help fight the fire.

There is a standing evacuation advisory in place for residents who live in southwest Big Pine and several roads remained closed, including Crocker/Glacier Lodge west of West Street, Pole Line Road and McMurry Meadows Road.

According to a press release issued at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday by CalFire, "While the fire shows little smoke or flame this morning, there are several hot spots throughout the fire that have the potential to flare up and consume additional acreage."

The fire originated approximately two miles south of Big Pine at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday and rapidly moved west until a wind shift forced the flames south, according to a joint press release from the Inyo County Sheriff's Department and CalFire. The flames moved up and over Crater Mountain, the prominent volcanic-red cinder cone on the west side of U.S. 395.

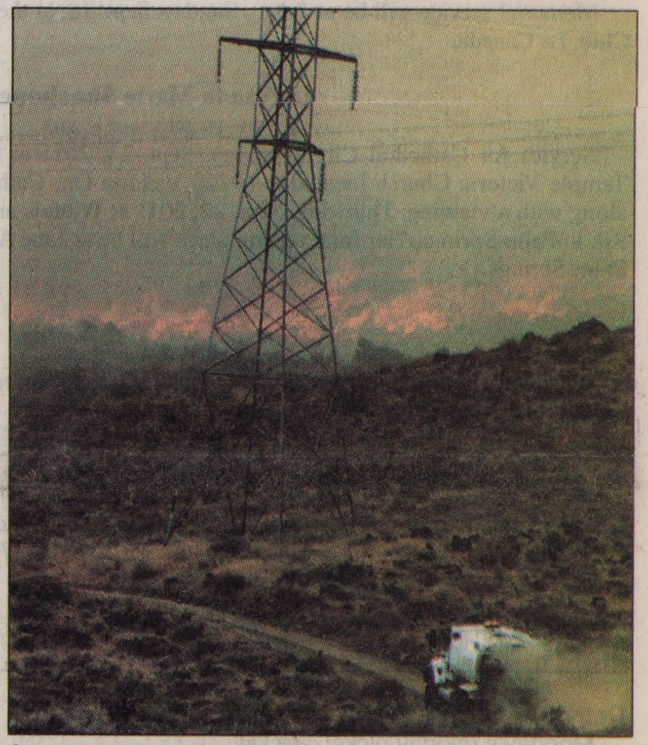
No structures have been threatened, but as of 11 a.m. Wednesday an evacuation advisory was still in effect for nearby residents living west of U.S. 395 and south of Walnut Street. The advisory was issued at 10 p.m. Tuesday. CODE Red, the county's reverse 9-1-1 emergency notification system, will be used to contact residents in case of an evacuation order or to disseminate additional information.

An evacuation center has been set up at the the Big Pine Tribe Gymnasium, according to Carma Roper, public information officer for the Inyo County Sheriff's Department.

Glenn Barley, information officer for CalFire, said at noon Wednesday that some aircraft were being released from the fire scene. "That's a good sign," he added that the weather at noon was calm, but a cloud cell was building over the mountains to the west and if the cell moved over the valley, winds could accompany it and hamper firefighting efforts.

CalFire is the lead agency on the blaze with the assistance from California Highway Patrol, Inyo County Sheriff's Department, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and resources from the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service and from the fire departments of Big Pine, Bishop and Mammoth. A total of 525 personnel are helping fight the fire, including 31 engines, 25 hand crews, 12 water tenders, two bull-dozers, nine fixed-wing planes and six helicopters.

There have been no reports of any injuries.



A water tender rushes toward the blazing John Fire south of Big Pine on Tuesday. Photo by Deb Murphy

LADWP crews accidentally started fire south of Big Pine

Spokesperson says spark from equipment ignited dry brush

By Mike Gervais OCT. 2011
Register Staff

Officials with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power said this week that one of its crews inadvertently sparked the John Fire south of Big Pine on Tuesday, Sept. 13. 2011

According to LADWP Public Information Officer Chris Plakos, a crew was trimming brush around transmission lines about three miles south of the community when trimming equipment apparently struck a rock, sending sparks into dry brush, igniting the blaze.

"When the crew realized that a fire had started, they quickly accessed shovels and fire extinguishers they had nearby at the work site to try to put the fire out," Plakos said in a statement issued by the DWP Monday. "However, when they attempted to fight the fire it began to spread very rapidly."

With the fire spreading and shovels and fire extinguishers doing little to slow it, Plakos said the crew reported the fire to authorities and evacuated, "for their safety and to avoid injury and property damage."

In addition to responders that included CalFire, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and local volunteer fire departments, Plakos said the LADWP responded with 14 employees, six water trucks, a dozer and two water pumps.

Hundreds of firefighters spent several days battling the blaze, which burned 5,353 acres along the foothills of the Sierra.

According to CalFire, the lead agency in charge of suppression efforts, the fire was 100 percent contained as of Friday, Sept. 17, without any damage to homes in Big Pine.

Two firefighters were injured while battling the blaze, but according to CalFire, their injuries were minor.

"The LADWP is evaluating how similar work in the field is conducted to ensure that all safety and security issues are addressed," Plakos said, referring to the weed reduction program.

CalFire continues its investigation into the fire and will make an official determination as to the cause. Additional information will be released as soon is it is available.

Plakos was unavailable for additional comment.

An air tanker drops flame retardant on the John Fire south of Big Pine in September. The LADWP recently said crews trimming brush were responsible for the blaze. Photo by Tom Heindel

SERVICES AVAILABLE IN BIG PINE

MOTELS AND LODGING
Big Pine Motel
Big Pine Resort Cottages
Bristlecone Motel
Bud Hinds Camping & Trailer Rentals
Glacier Lodge
Starlight Motel

GROCERIES AND SUNDRIES
Carroll's Market
Hi Country Market
Big Pine Liquor & Mini Mart

SPORTING GOODS, TACKLE, GIFTS
Big Pine Station
Big Pine Liquor & Mini Mart
Crystal Gazebo Books & Gifts
Roy's Gun & Tackle - fishing & hunting supplies
Walker Gallery - Books & Art
Aberdeen Resort

FUEL AND AUTOMOTIVE SERVICES
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Big Pine Chevron-AAA-24 hr. service
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MISC. SERVICES
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Mountain View Video - tapes & video
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Rossie's Cocktails
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RESTAURANTS, AND FAST FOOD
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Country Kitchen
Jack & Kitty's Egg Chalet
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Wink's Family Restaurant
Rula's Ice Cream Parlor & Deli
Whitlock's Burgers & Fries
Big Pine Liquor & Mini Mart
Hi Country Market

OTHER SERVICES
Big Pine Saddle Club
Glacier Pack Train 619-938-2538
Mendenhall County Park
Inyo County Free Library
Volunteer Fire Dept. & Ambulance Service
Baptist Church
Big Pine Community United Methodist Church
Catholic Mission Church
Tehaawa Lobi Church

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YEAR 'ROUND RECREATION

BIG PINE IS TWICE BLESSED WITH WONDERS OF THE MOUNTAINS, NESTLED AGAINST THE 14,000 FT. CRAGGY PEAKS OF THE PALISADE CREST TO THE WEST AND TO THE EAST THE WHITE MOUNTAINS AND ANCIENT BRISTLECONE PINE FOREST RISING TO THE 14,000 FT. LEVEL.

THROUGH ALL SEASONS BIG PINE IS TRULY THE HUB OF THE INYO COUNTY VACATION WONDERLAND.

SPRING brings desert and mountain wild flowers into bloom. Take the beautiful Death Valley loop trip and see the sand dunes, sulphur pits, colorful rocks, over seven varieties of cacti, ghost towns, old mines and historic landmarks such as the remains of the old toll house on Westgard Pass.

In the **SUMMER** discover the high country lakes, miles of streams, camp at many of the many USFS and county campgrounds, drive to the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, enjoy the picnic area at Schullman Grove and the self guided hiking tour.

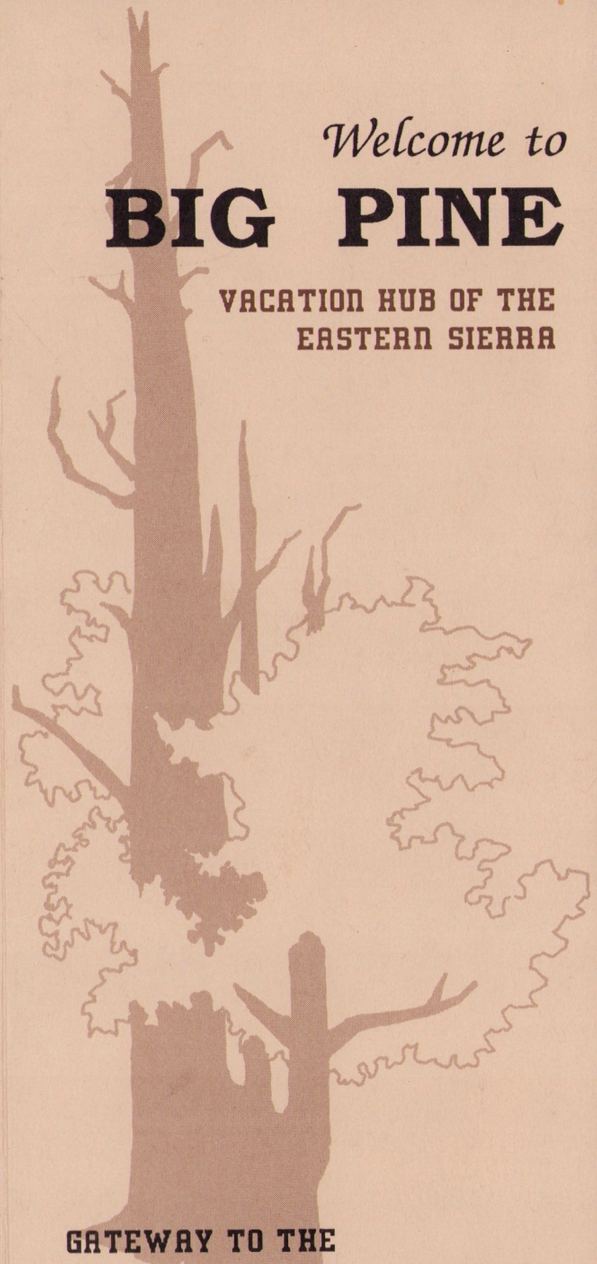
FALL is the perfect time to capture the beauty of the foliage in full autumn color, explore ghost towns, hunt and fly-fish.

Enjoy **WINTER** trout, catfish and bass fishing in the Owens River as well as upland game hunting. Winter is another great time for the loop to the east through Death Valley, world famous for its fascinating history and beauty and for being the lowest point in the U.S. In the mountains to the west, have family snow fun cross country skiing, sledding, tobogganing and ice skating on frozen ponds.

In the town of Big Pine the vacationer or passing tourist will find all the necessities of accommodation. There are several motels, restaurants, gas and service stations and stores to meet most needs. Visitors can take leisurely walks through safe, quiet streets, visit the picturesque old church whose stained glass windows were brought around 'the Horn' on sailing ships, and chat with friendly residents.

THIS BROCHURE PRESENTED BY YOUR FRIENDLY BIG PINE MERCHANTS

Published by the Big Pine Civic Club
P.O. Box 569
Big Pine, California 93513



Welcome to

BIG PINE

VACATION HUB OF THE EASTERN SIERRA

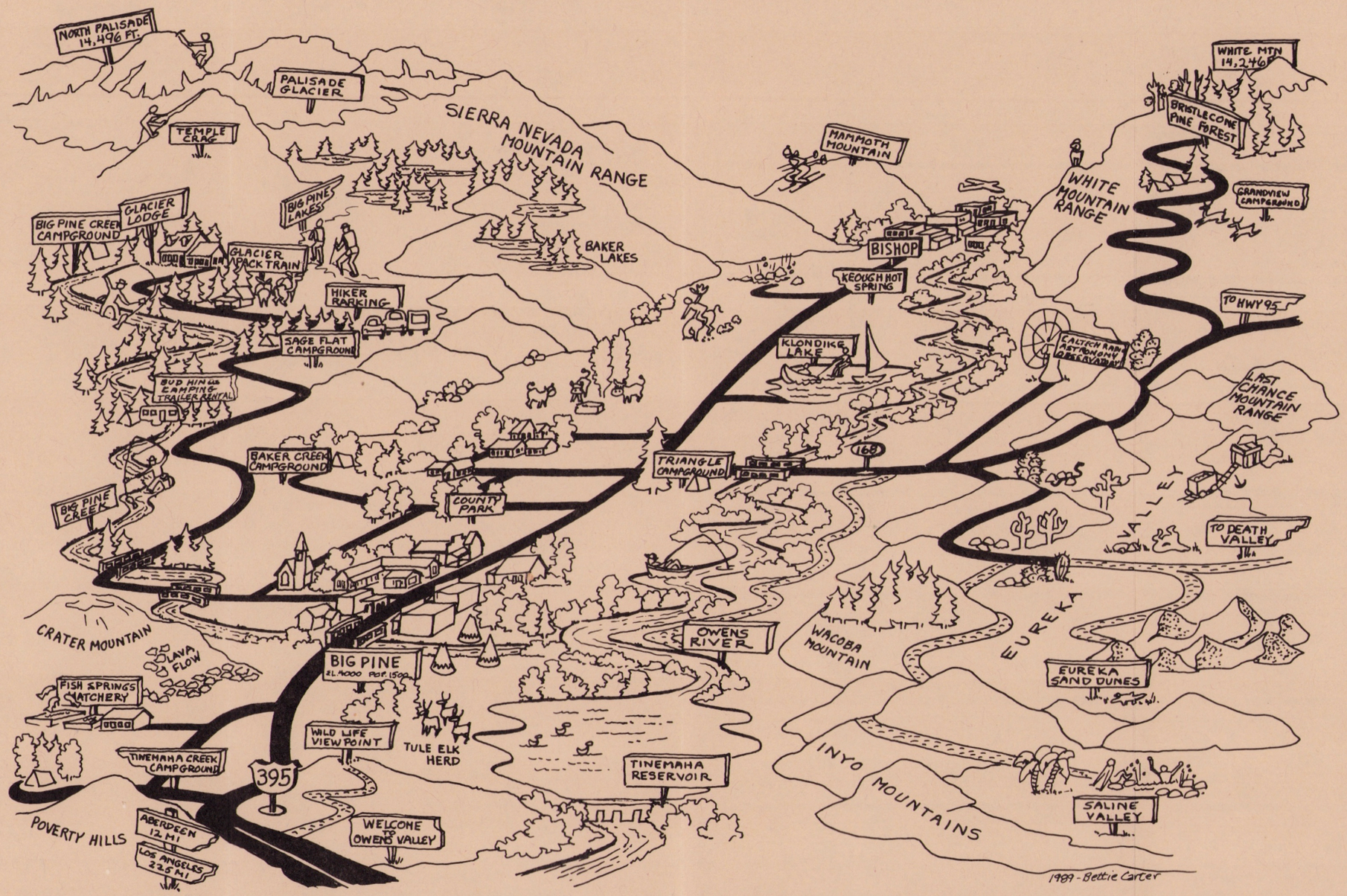
GATEWAY TO THE

Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest

North Entrance to Death Valley

BIG PINE RECREATION AREA

Big Pine, 4,000 ft. elevation lies in the heart of the beautiful Owens Valley, an easy half-day drive from southern California on U.S. highway 395, the arterial highway from southern California to Reno, Nevada.



PALISADE GLACIER

The southern most glacier in the United States, located at the 13 to 14,000 ft. level, the Palisades Glacier measures 2 to 2½ miles in length and 1 mile in width. Both glacier and rock climbing conditions of the palisades should be attempted only by the experienced as the precipitous front wall of the Sierra holds no encouragement of the building of trails.

BIG PINE and BAKER LAKES

Big Pine Creek Canyon North and South Fork trails pass a chain of 15 lakes on the way to the glacier areas. These spectacular rugged glacier fed lakes are well stocked with good sized trout, the higher ones with the ever-treasured golden trout. Day hikers or riders should plan a full day for this trip. Baker Lake trails from the pack station cross Logger's Flat on Baker Ridge to 10 remote lakes in beautiful alpine setting.

BIG PINE CREEK and CAMPGROUNDS

Big Pine Canyon boasts one of the finest trout streams in the High Sierra. Rainbow and Brown trout, stocked and native, are plentiful and the creek is easily accessible in most areas. Fishing season runs from May through October and deer and upland game birds are hunted in their respective seasons. Well maintained campgrounds with a total of 85 spaces line Big Pine Creek. At 8,000 ft., 11 miles from the town of Big Pine, at road's end, is Glacier Lodge with rooms, housekeeping cabins, dining room, store and trout pond. Glacier Pack Train, open only through the summer months, offers trail rides and pack trips to the North Fork and Big Pine Lakes. Campsites and vacation trailer rentals are available at Hinds Trailer Park at the 6500 ft. level.

OWENS RIVER

Sizeable trout, bass, and catfish are taken from the Owens River all year 'round. Dove, chukkar, pheasant, quail and deer are hunted in season along the river banks and Tinemaha Reservoir areas. Floating the many miles of winding river is a popular way to cool off on hot summer days.

ANCIENT BRISTLECONE PINE FOREST

At 10 to 11,000 ft., high on the windswept, rock strewn slopes of the White Mountains, just 23 miles from Big Pine are the oldest known living things in the world — the amazing Bristlecone Pines, some more than 1000 year older than the oldest Redwoods. Methuselah, age 4600, was a youngster when Moses received the Ten Commandments. During the summer months, the USFS gives informative talks on the history of these oldest living trees and self guided tours complete the experience. The paved road enroute offers several spectacular view points to the valley 6000 ft. below and across to the crest of the Sierra range.

THE "EARS"

Rising to a height of 140 ft. (45m) in the air and seen from distant miles in the center flats of the Owens Valley are the star listening radio telescopes installed and operated by Caltech. The eight listening devices at the facility range from 18 ft. or 5.5m to 130 ft. or 40m in diameter.

DEATH VALLEY Entrance

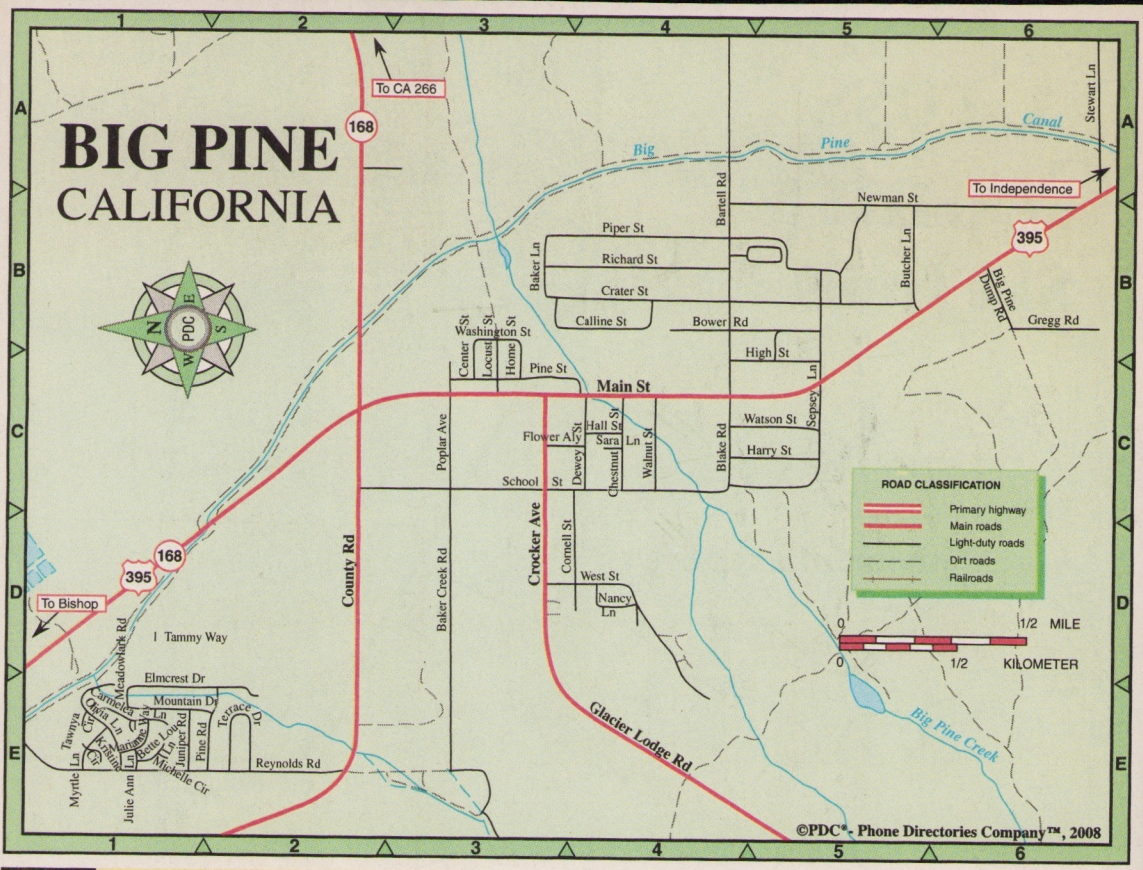
The most enjoyable and interesting way to see Death Valley is on the partially paved 75 mile road that goes from Big Pine through the Inyo Mountains, Eureka Valley with the highest sand dunes in the U.S., the Last Chance Range with its old mines and sulphur pits and into the valley near the famed Ubehebe Crater and Scotty's Castle. A southward, unpaved, junction in the road past Wacoba Mountain leads into the famed Saline Valley and its many hot pools.

KLONDIKE LAKE

Three miles north of Big Pine, a reservoir of water furnished by the City of Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power, offers recreational water skiing, sailing, windsurfing and swimming on the otherwise barren flats of the valley floor.

TULE ELK HERD

At the wildlife viewpoint 7 miles south of Big Pine, various displays interpreting the Tule Elk, are provided. Early evening hours are the best time to view the herd. Nearby, the Fish Springs State Fish Hatchery is 5 miles south of town.



Big Pine Street Index

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Bower Rd	B-4
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Carmelea Ln	E-1
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Dewey St	C-4
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Flower Aly	C-3
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Harry St	C-5
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Juniper Rd	E-1
Kristine Cir	E-1

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Main St	C-4
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Meadowlark Rd	E-1
Michelle Cir	E-1
Mountain Dr	E-1
Myrtle Ln	E-1
Nancy Ln	D-4
Newman St	B-3
Olivia Ln	E-1
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Big Pine, California local history binder content list

Compiled by Bob Larson (1934-2024).

Collection of magazine articles, newspaper clippings, and other printed ephemera related to town of Big Pine, Inyo County, California in the Owens Valley.

Item compiled by/from the collection of Robert Wood "Bob" Larson (1934-2024). Bob Larson was a teacher at Salinas High School in Salinas, California for many years. Bob inherited his aunt Enid A. Larson's home in Big Pine, Inyo County, California in 1991, and permanently relocated to Big Pine in 2013. He continued his aunt Enid's collection related to Owens Valley History, and he accumulated articles and books on the natural and human history of Inyo County.

Item from the Inyo County Free Library Local History Room Collection. Scanned by the Inyo County Free Library in April 2026.

Background on Big Pine, Inyo County, California:

Big Pine is a census-designated place in Inyo County, California with a population of approximately 1,800 residents. The community is 15 miles south of the county's most populated area, Bishop, and about 25 miles north of the Inyo County seat Independence. The area is well known for recreational activities (including hiking and fishing) in the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the west.

Binder contents (in order of appearance):

Cover: Cover of Big Pine Visitor's Guide publication, no date.

Postcard: Big Pine Station Sporting Goods postcards. Front and back.

Flyer: Glacier Pack Train, Palisade Glacier Region, Big Pine, CA.

Postcard: Eastern Sierra postcard depicting mountain ranges in the Eastern Sierra.

Illustration of Country Kitchen, hand dated [2015?].

Photocopy of photograph. Handwritten caption: "Big Pine Tree 1920. John Howard – Rafael Rossie – Where highway goes over Westgarde." Appears to be the Roosevelt Tree, which stood in Big Pine between 1913-2020.

Illustration of Copper Top BBQ in Big Pine. Hand dated 2016.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register* (Bishop, Inyo, California), 20 Dec 2014, p. [?]: "Captain Davidson reported that the first signs of Native Americans that he encountered…"

Unknown periodical clipping: “Temple Crag looms above and outside of the small town of Big Pine.”

Unknown periodical clipping: Advertisement for Glacier Lodge.

Website / email printout: “Picture of Baxter Cabin in Inyo Mountains.”

Flyer/mailer: “Memorial Day 2023 – ‘Piper vs. Big Pine Unified School District’ – June 2, 1924.” Mailer speaks about Big Pine resident and Native American child Alice Piper whose family successfully sued BPUSD in 1924 to desegregate the school.

Photo with handwritten caption: “Stone house ruins – Little Pine Creek – 2014 – Above Big Pine.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Big Pine – Come Play in Our Backyard.”

Map: “Big Pine Street Index.”

Map: Fishing Map for Owens Valley / Eastern Sierra. Reverse includes descriptions of fishing areas, creeks, reservoirs, etc.

Brochure: Aberdeen Resort in the small community of Aberdeen, located between Independence and Big Pine.

Maps: Collection of photocopied maps that appear to be taken from a book.

Periodical clipping: *2013 Eastern Sierra Fishing & Vacation Guide*, p. 56: “Big Pine Area” map.

Map: “Figure 2.4-1 – Proposed Enhancement Elements of Baker Creek Site.”

Newspaper clipping: *The Sheet* (Mammoth Lakes, Mono, California), 27 Feb 2021, p. 10. “BBQ For Two – Big Pine Adds a Second BBQ Joint.”

Magazine clipping: *Inyo County – The Other Side of California*. “Big Pine.”

Magazine clipping: *Inyo County Visitors Guide – Tenth Edition*, p. 18. “ Big Pine – Gateway to Outdoor Recreation” and “The Roosevelt Tree of Big Pine.”

Website printout from www.lonepinechamber.org: “Big Pine, California.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 23 Apr 2013, p. 5: “A Welcome Sign in Big Pine.”

Flyer / printout: “Easy Day Trips from Big Pine.”

Magazine article: *The Eastside Magazine*, Spring 2010, p. 28-30. “Downtown Guide – Little ‘Ol Big Pine.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 29 Jan 2015, p. 13. “The Best in the US – Big Pine’s Copper Top BBQ is Where Food Makes Friends.”

Newspaper clipping: *The Sheet*, 16 Aug 2014. “Rossi’s Resets in Big Pine.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 13 Sep 2014, p. A1. “Big Pine bar and eatery returns to its roots.” Article on Rossi’s Place.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Big Pine Citizen of the Decade Bob Steele.” Hand dated 2016.

Newspaper clipping: *Los Angeles Times*, 12 Dec 2010, p. 102. “Sierra Majesty.”

Photograph captioned “Arch Above Big Pine.”

Periodical clipping: Eastern Sierra News Service / Inyo County News-Letter, 31 July 1978, p. 3. Article covers annual Big Pine Grapevine Festival, hosted by Bob and Stan Steele.

Periodical article: *Inyo County Visitors Guide – Sixth Edition.* “A Near View of the Palisades Glacier” by David Woodruff. Includes cover of periodical.

Magazine article: *The Eastside Magazine*, Fall 2010, p. 12-13. “Call of the Palisades: A Tribute to John Fischer” by Andy Selters.

Periodical clipping: *The Big Pine Visitors Guide*. “Mountain Biking.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 25 Feb 2010, p. A2. Obituary: “Irma Baker Garner – 1915-2010.”

Periodical clipping: *The Album – Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono*, Vol. 2 No. 2, April 1989, p. 41-42. “Letters to the Editor” regarding Glacier Lodge.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Big Pine Creek.”

Periodical clipping: *Inyo County Visitors Guide – Seventh Edition*, p. 27. “Big Pine Tree with Palisades Glacier in the background.”

Photograph: Image of campsite with fire ring and kindling. May be related to obituary of Karl Ranson “Randy” Weber on same page of binder.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*. [Undated, but article ran in 6 May, 13 May, and 20 May 2017 issues]. Obituary: “Karl Ransom Weber.” Known as Randy Weber, lived/camped in Big Pine area.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Route 10: Big Pine Canyon”; “Route 9: Old Hwy 395 – Aberdeen – Fish Springs”;

Newspaper clipping: *The Sheet*, 8 Dec 2018. “Crestfallen over water.” Letter to the editor from Gary Nelson, Mono City.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 13 Sep 2018, p. 11. “This statue of Alice Piper, an early Native American civil rights hero, was unveiled in 2014.”

Newsletter: *The Big Pine Beacon – News from Big Pine Unified School District*, 15 May 2012, Vol. 3 No. 3. "The Alice Piper Memorial Statue Project."

Unknown periodical clipping: "Alice Piper Statue Project Dream Closer to Reality" by Pamela Jones, Superintendent.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, [unknown date; same photo and text ran in 19 Jul 2016 and 26 Feb 2019 issues]. "Time Warp Tuesday." Photo of Big Pine Indian Day School, which includes a young Alice Piper.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 15 Feb 2014, p. 1. "Honoring Alice Piper – Piper v. Big Pine School District set a precedent for school desegregation."

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 7 Jun 2014, p. 1. "Long-awaited honor unveiled at Big Pine Schools – Pioneering civil rights activist Alice Piper memorialized with statue on campus that refused to accept her."

Newspaper clipping: *The Sheet*, 3 Oct 2015, p. 22. "Business – Holt it Right There! Hi-Country Market has it all in Big Pine."

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 4 Apr 2015, p. 18. "A large herd of mule deer roaming the hills above Big Pine."

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 13 May 2017, p. 18. "First time hiking in the Sierra" by Craig Jackson. Includes photos of Lon Chaney's Cabin in the Sierra Mountains above Big Pine.

Newspaper clipping: *Los Angeles Times*, 7 Jun 2003, p. B2. "Actor Lon Chaney's Phantom of the Forest – The silent film star's stone cabin remains tucket away in the remote eastern Sierra" by Leslie Carlson.

Periodical clipping: *The Album – Times & Tales of Inyo-Mono*, Vol. VI, No. 3, Summer 1993, 34-35. "History Bits – Lon Chaney" by Charles Peterson. Covers Lon Chaney's cabin in Big Pine.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 24 Dec 2012, p. 1. "Massive snowfalls are rare in the Owens Valley, but back in 1916 Big Pine got hit with 3-4 feet. Above, now-vintage autos slide past what looks like the original Carroll's Market."

Photocopy of photograph: "Big Pine, Calif. – H.W.M. 780,:

Photocopy of photograph: Town of Big Pine? Possibly covered in snow.

Website printout: Appears to be from Find a Grave. Memorial page for Harry Warner Mendenhall (1883-1952). Memorial credits Mendenhall as having "photographed many historic places and aspects, people of Inyo County, and started his Sporting Goods/Hardware store, which was carried on after he passed away by his wife, Edith (Edie)."

Website printout: Appears to be from Find a Grave. Memorial page for Edith May "Edie" Calkins Mendenhall (1895-1976) [see above].

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 14 May 2020, p. B1. "Snowbound Crater Mountain."

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 4 Apr 2015, p. 18. "A Half-day and two peaks near Big Pine" by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 28 Feb 2015, p. B8. "Cool climb to Crater Mountain" by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 6 May 2017, p. 18. "Two years and a ton of snow" by Craig Jackson. Article on climbing Camp Mountain.

Document: Photocopied map. "Big Pine – Crater Mountain Self-Guided 4WD Loop Trip."

Document: Placer Claim for Birch Placer Mining Claim, Big Pine, Little Pine Mining District, Inyo County, dated 5 Feb 1957. Locators listed as Maynard Rossi and another person, both of Lone Pine, Calif.

Document: Placer Claim for Birch Creek mining claim, "six and a half miles south west of Big Pine." Dated 10 Feb 1961. Locators listed as Duane Rossie, Gary Rossi, and Robert Bradley.

Newspaper clipping: *The Sheet*, 4 Sep 2021. "A Life in the Sierra – Duane Rossi is still going strong at 84" by Lunch.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 20 Feb 2016, p. 17. "In a crater, then a hot ditch" by Craig Jackson. Article on Crater Mountain.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 19 Sep 2015, p. 15. "Hiek to Second Lake scores a touchdown" by Craig Jackson. Article on hiking Big Pine Creek Trail to Big Pine's Second Lake.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 17 Dec 2016, p. 16. "Supreme vistas at High Meadows" by Craig Jackson. Article on hiking Big Pine Canyon.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 1 Apr 2017, p. 18. "Feels good to be in the woods" by Craig Jackson. Article begins "The south and north forks of Big Pine Canyon offer some of the best scenery…"

Unknown black and white photo of mountains, probably the Sierra Nevada Mountains above Big Pine.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 20 Apr 2019, p. 19. "Livin' life outside the concrete jungle" by Craig Jackson. Article on climbing to "The Second Lake on the North Fork of Big Pine Canyon."

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 14 Feb 2015, p. A15. "Pre-storm scramble to Second Lake" by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 12 Jul 2014, p. 19. “Dramatic peaks, pristine lakes await west of Big Pine – Sierra Sojourns” by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 9 Nov 2019, p. A-10. “Fred Eaton – the lesser known water king” by David Woodruff. Article on former Los Angeles mayor Fred Eaton who was involved in the Los Angeles Aqueduct project but later retired to poultry farming in Big Pine.

Handwritten page with noted about mountains and peaks in the Eastern Sierra near Big Pine. Begins: “Palisade named by the Calif Geological Survey in 1864.”

Hand drawn [pencil?] map of peaks in the Eastern Sierra, beginning with Crater Mountain on the far left and ending with Piper Peak on the far right.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register* [same photo and text ran in both 25 Feb 2017 and 29 Aug 2020 issues]. “The entire Inyo Good Road Club membership is assembled in front of Fred Eaton’s poultry ranch on Aug. 31, 1910, to celebrate the dedication of El Camino Sierra.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 7 Sep 2019, p. 15. “On a familiar trail with a good friend” by Craig Jackson. Article on hiking the Sierra Nevada Mountains above Big Pine.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 2 June 2018, p. 15. “Put your head down and go” by Craig Jackson. Article on hiking the Palisades near Big Pine.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 20 Jul 2019, p. 15. “First backcountry hike of the year” by Craig Jackson. Begins: “It’s been a long, long time.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 4 Jul 2015, p. 15. “Up the South Fork to Finger Lake” by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 18 Apr 2015, p. 17. “Third time’s a charm for Piper Peak” by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 4 Mar 2017, p. 16. “Hiking, Walking and Wandering” by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 16 May 2020, p. 15. “Piper Peak” by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 11 Mar 2017, p. 18. "A hike to a peak and a creek" by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 18 Jan 2020, p. B1. “A birthday hike spent entirely in the snow” by Craig Jackson. Article on hiking near Birch Mountain.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 13 Feb 2016, p. 18. "Beautiful day near Baker Creek" by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 1 Oct 2016, p. A18. "Seven lakes on a loop" by Craig Jackson. Article on hiking near Big Pine and Palisades.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 22 Jul 2017, p. A16. "Fifth might be finest of the Big Pine Lakes" by Craig Jackson.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 4 Nov 2017, p. 17. "High Meadows is what it is" by Craig Jackson.

Unknown document: “Cook hikes on Big Pine Creek.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Western Screech Owl in a tree on Flower Alley in Big Pine. Photo by Howard Walker.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Big Pine Canyon: glacier gateway.”

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 16 Dec 2017 p. 17. "A blustery day, to say the least" by Craig Jackson. Article begins: “Two weeks after that first storm, and three days after Thanksgiving…” Article on hiking near Temple Crag.

Unknown periodical clipping. Color photograph that appears to be snow-covered Sierra Nevada Mountains above Big Pine.

Unknown document: “Big Pine Recreation Area.” Includes drawn cartoon map of Big Pine area.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register* [article ran four times; first published 24 May 2014, p. 17]. “While white settlers began building large homes in the Owens Valley…” by David Woodruff. Article on early Independence, Inyo County, California.

Periodical clipping: Photocopied page from *The Archaeology of Pinyon House, Two Eagles, and Crater Middens – Three Residential Sites in Owens Valley, Eastern California* by Robert L. Bettinger, 1989. “Fig. 8.2. ‘A Mono Home’”. Shows “aboriginal dome wikiup […] on the outskirts of the modern town of Big Pine…”

Photographs of landscape in Big Pine area, including Two Door Canyon, Crater Mountain Area. Dated 2012.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Wild Bees Near Big Pine.” Hand dated 2012.

Unknown periodical clipping: Photograph of group of hikers alongside yellow wildflowers below snow covered mountains [possibly the Sierra Nevada Mountains above Big Pine].

Photograph: Snow covered mountains [possibly the Sierra Nevada Mountains above Big Pine].

Photocopy of topographical map of Big Pine area. Shows Grouse Spring, Logging Flat and Sage Flat.

Color photograph of snow covered mountains [possibly the Sierra Nevada Mountains above Big Pine].

Unknown periodical clipping: “North Fork Trail – Black Lake” / “North Fork Trail – First, Second and Third Lakes.” Guides to hiking trails in the Sierra Nevada Mountains above Big Pine.

Hand drawn map of Big Pine area. Shows Big Pine Creek, Sugar Loaf Road, Baker Creek, Yellow Billed Cuckoo Preserve. Dated 2011. “Not to scale.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Inyo National Forest.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “The Palisades, Kings Canyon National Park.”

Unknown periodical clipping: Advertisement for “Big Pine – Vacation Hub of the Eastern Sierra.”

Newspaper clipping: *Los Angeles Times*, 17 Oct 2010, p. 88. “Eastern Sierra’s golden days” by Dan Blackburn. Image of Big Pine Canyon.

Periodical clipping: *The Album – Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono*, April 1990, p. 38, 40. “Second Lake Dam” by T. Eugene Barrows.”

Periodical clipping: *Inyo-Mono Outdoor Guide, 1962*. Photocopy. Advertisement for Glacier Lodge.

Website printout: “Day Hiking in Big Pine Canyon” by Dave McNeill.

Unknown newspaper clipping, dated 29 Aug – 4 Sep 1996: “A Little about Big Pine” by Jane Fisher.

Document: Photocopy of hand drawn Fishing Map of Big Pine region. Reverse side includes text about fishing areas. Undated.

Document: “Wilderness Hiking – Big Pine Canyon – Inyo National Forest.” Reverse includes a map of John Muir Wilderness. Document created by US Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service, and White Mountain Ranger Station.

Document: Map of Big Pine Canyon area.

Periodical clipping: “Eastern High Sierra Area Map.”

Document: “Big Pine Creek Canyon Camping – Inyo National Forest.” Document created by US Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service, and White Mountain Ranger Station.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 18 Jul 2020, p. 12. “Back on another peak, this time Mt. Tinemaha” by Craig Jackson.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Winter Sunrise – December 2018 – Photo by Bill Bjorklund.”

Periodical clipping: *The Big Pine Visitors Guide*, [no date], p. 25. “Palisade Glacier (Southernmost Glacier in the Western Hemisphere).”

Unknown periodical clipping: “High above the vast Eastern Sierra, majestic mountain peaks loom over the Owens Valley, seen here is the Palisade Glacier area, west of Big Pine.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Palisade Glacier.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Palisade Glacier area.”

Unknown periodical clipping: “Alpine Views – Big Pine Creek North Fork Trail, John Muir Wilderness, CA.”

Page of four color photographs. Captioned clockwise from top left: “Old Water Ditch”; “2016 Bob Larson”; [no caption]; “Perlite Mine.”

Brochure: Glacier Lodge, Big Pine, California. No date.

Periodical clipping: *The Album - Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono*, [hand dated Summer 1994], p. 55-58. “Birthday Summons” by Willma Willis Gore. Article recalling life on the Giroux Ranch near Big Pine in the 1920s.

Newspaper clipping: *Los Angeles Times*, 29 Sep 1996, p. L5. “Weekend Escape: Big Pine - Saps for the Sierra – On the track of the Palisade Glacier… up and up and up” by Vani Rangachar.

Unknown newspaper clipping: “Let’s Go to the Glacier” by Alexander Marko. No date. Includes photo: “This tremendous rock rests on an ice pinnacle fully six feet high.”

Document: “Birch Lake and Red Lake Trailheads – Inyo National Forest.” Hiking guide by US Forest Service, White Mountain Ranger Station.

Periodical clipping: *Inyo County Visitors Guide – Fifth Edition*, p. 24-25. “Let’s Spend Another Day in Big Pine” by Big Pine Entrepreneur Class. Hand dated 2012.

Unknown newspaper clipping: "Explore Big Pine's backyard" by Mike Bodine. Hand dated 2012.

Magazine article: *Mammoth Sierra Magazine,* June-July 2013, p. 10-11. “Honeybee Inheritance – The long beekeeping tradition of the Baxter family” by Lyra Pierotti.

Website printout from tile.loc.gov: Sanborn Map Company map of Big Pine, California dated June 1909. Handwriting with arrows showing “Meredith’s House” and “Gene’s House.” Additional page shows Crocker Ave and Dewey Ave.

Document: Hand drawn map dated 1924 showing intersection of School Street and Crocker Ave in Big Pine. Map names many businesses and individuals living in Big Pine during 1924.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 21 Jun 2014, p. 8. Photo from article “The origins and long history of Joseph’s grocery stores” by Rob Pearce. Photo captioned “Minnie and Louis Joseph standing in front of the second Big Pine Joseph’s where Rossi’s was…”

Periodical clipping: *Report XVII of the State Mineralogist, Mining in California During 1920*. Passage on the Nancy Hanks lead-silver mine near Big Pine, owned by George B. Warren of Big Pine.

Photocopy of photo: Big Pine “Plunge” pool.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Warren’s Swimming Hole” by Duane Rossie. Hand dated 2010.

Unknown periodical clipping: “George B. Warren – Inventor and Manufacturer.” Hand dated 1912.

Page of four color photographs depicting Warren’s Hot Plunge in Big Pine.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 22 Mar 2011, p. 1. “Fire destroys 19 homes in Big Pine” by Mike Gervais.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 15 Sep 2011, p. A1. "Fire scorches 2,000 acres south of Big Pine" by Mike Bodine.

Newspaper clipping: *Inyo Register*, 4 Oct 2011, p. A1. "LADWP crews accidentally started fire south of Big Pine" by Mike Gervais.

Document: “Big Pine Recreation Area” map and guide.

Unknown periodical clipping: “Big Pine Street Index.”

[Revised ICFL-MS 7 April 2026]